

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 6 OCTOBER 2016
CALL IN OF CABINET DECISION – FUTURE FUNDING OF HOMELESS
PATHWAY SUPPORTED HOUSING
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

(Contact: Paul Cracknell, Tel: (01993) 861523)

(The decisions on this matter will be resolutions or recommendations to Cabinet)

1. PURPOSE

To consider the call-in request relating to a Cabinet decision of 21 September 2016 (Minute No 57) in respect of the withdrawal of funding to Citizens Advice Oxfordshire for the Housing and Debt project with effect from 1st April 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That the Committee decides whether or not to support the call-in request; and
- (b) That, if the request is supported, the Committee determines whether it wishes to submit any additional comments to Cabinet.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. At its meeting held on 21 September 2016 the Cabinet considered a report regarding the implications of Oxfordshire County Council's decision to reduce countywide funding for supported housing for homeless adults by £1.5m commencing 1st April 2017.
- 3.2. A copy of the report, together with the relevant extract from the minutes of the Cabinet meeting, is attached as Appendix A. The submission made by Citizens Advice, Oxfordshire, appears as Appendix B.
- 3.3. The Cabinet's decision has been the subject of a call-in request from Councillors J C Cooper, A M Graham, Ms E P R Leffman and Dr E M E Poskitt in the following terms:

“We the undersigned wish the matter above to be called before the Economic & Social scrutiny committee so that body can explore further and understand the discrepancies between the figures in the C.A.B. presentation to Cabinet and the report published in Cabinet papers”.

- 3.4. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules the call-in has been referred by the Head of Paid Service to this Committee for consideration.
- 3.5. Officers have investigated further the discrepancies between the figures quoted in the initial report and the CAB interpretation and can confirm that there are different interpretations of the amount of funding allocated to the Housing and Debt Project.
- 3.6. In essence the grant structure payable to CAB in 15/16 is set out below:-

Total Grant Payable	£156,000
Less rent/insurance	£ 15,395
Net Payable	£ 140,605

- 3.7. The above elements are not in dispute it is merely the split of the overall grant payable of £156,000 between Core Funding, Rural Project and Housing/Debt advice.
- 3.8. In April 2012 the Council wrote to CAB and advised them of the grant award for 12/13 – within this letter it clearly states that the Housing/Debt Advice element was £32,000 with Core Funding and Rural Advice making up the balance of £124,000.
- 3.9. In February 2013 the Council wrote to CAB and advised them that the proposed cuts in funding had been withdrawn and funding would continue at the following levels:- Core Funding £112,000; Rural Advice Project £20,000; Housing/Debt Advice £24,000.
- 3.10. Clearly these positions are inconsistent and therefore on the basis of the above it is the recommendation of officers that the funding reduction for the Housing/Debt Advice should follow the latest communication of £24,000 rather than the £32,000 originally stated in the report. Officer believe this is in line with the clear desire of Cabinet not to impose a cut in the core funding of CAB.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

The Committee could agree with the Cabinet's original decision and endorse the proposed response in which case the decision will be implemented immediately. The Committee could support the request or recommend an alternative position to the Cabinet for them to reconsider.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Should the funding cut be amended to the lesser amount there will be a budget gap of £8,000 – this will be dealt with as part of the 17/18 budget process.

6. RISKS

None

7. REASONS

To enable the Committee to consider the matter in light of the call-in and the information provided in the report.

Keith Butler
Head of Democratic Services

(Author: Paul Cracknell, Tel: (01993) 861523; Email: paul.cracknell@westoxon.gov.uk)

Date: 27 September 2016

Background Papers:

None

REPORT TO THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2016

FUTURE FUNDING OF HOMELESS PATHWAY SUPPORTED HOUSING

**REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER FOR
REVENUES AND HOUSING SUPPORT**

Contact: Jon Dearing, Tel: (01993) 861221

(The decisions on this matter will be resolutions)

1. PURPOSE

To consider the implications of Oxfordshire County Council's decision to reduce countywide funding for supported housing for homeless adults by £1.5m commencing 1st April 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That the Council joins and contributes to the County-wide pool and jointly commissions the proposed reduced service from 1st April 2017 for three years;
- (b) That an additional four complex needs beds be commissioned, in collaboration with Oxford City Council;
- (c) That authority to approve the final governance agreement be delegated to the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing; and
- (d) That notice is given to the Citizens Advice Bureau that funding for the Housing and Debt project will be withdrawn with effect from 1st April 2017.

3. BACKGROUND

The County Council has decided to cease its funding for the countywide pathway of supported housing for homeless adults. The current funding of £1.5m per annum is due to be reduced in a phased approach commencing on 1st April 2017 (the County Council will provide £1m in 2017/18, £0.5m in 2018/19 and no funding from 1st April 2019). In response, the City and District Councils have been considering alternative ways of financing future provision of a lesser number of units of this type of supported accommodation and a number of potential options have been considered. This report considers which option should be pursued by this Council, given the significant knock on impact of the County decision on this Council's services and the collaborative way supporting people services have been delivered historically.

Details of the existing pathway are shown in [Appendix A](#) (page 6). Provision comprises 285 units of accommodation across the county, the majority of which are located in Oxford including O'Hanlon House and Simon House; two hostels that provide 106 bed spaces with staff on site 24/7 and which can therefore accommodate adults with high and complex support needs.

Clients with 'complex needs' are those that are experiencing several problems at the same time; such as mental ill health, homelessness, drug or alcohol misuse, offending, physical disability and family breakdown. These are individuals for whom if one of these needs were to be addressed it would be likely that other issues would still exist. These individuals are regarded as posing a serious risk to themselves, others and/or property. They have ineffective contact with support services and are living chaotic lives.

In West Oxfordshire, there are 5 bed spaces plus an assessment bed space in a shared house in Chipping Norton (Horsefair). These units are not staffed 24/7 and are not appropriate for clients with complex needs. Priority for accessing the pathway is given to single homeless adults who are rough sleeping and who have high support needs.

The clients who access the accommodation have a range of support needs including those deriving from mental health conditions and needs arising from substance misuse. Support is provided to enable clients to address the issues that led them to become homeless and enable them to move on from the pathway into independent living. Typically services help people to manage money and pay bills, learn how to sustain a tenancy, access community and health services, work or training and stop offending, cease substance misuse or other anti-social behaviour.

In response to the County Council's withdrawal of funding for the Homeless Pathway, the City and District Councils have put forward a proposal that they will commission a reduced service from 1st April 2017 (for three years with a review taking place early in year 3); pooling the County's reducing contributions (see paragraph 0), a £150,000 per annum contribution from the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group plus District/City contributions based on the current average service usage for each (10% for WODC). How the pooled budget is made up is summarised in the following table:

Housing Related Support Pool Budget Income	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Oxford City Council	£161,700	£161,700	£161,700
Cherwell DC	£62,700	£62,700	£62,700
South Oxfordshire DC	£36,300	£36,300	£36,300
Vale Of White Horse DC	£36,300	£36,300	£36,300
West Oxfordshire DC	£33,000	£33,000	£33,000
OCCG	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000
Oxfordshire County Council	£1,000,000	£500,000	£0
Annual Totals:	£1,480,000	£980,000	£480,000
Total Three Year Pool:			£2,940,000

The pooled budget would be used to front-load funding in Year 1 (2017/18) to allow for the transition from the current state to the reduced provision. The year 1 (2017/18) expenditure will therefore be £1,246,000; being slightly less than the year 1 budget availability shown in the table above (this is because the previously agreed County Council pattern of contributions does not match the desired expenditure pattern). This leaves £847,000 per annum for Years 2 and 3 (April 2018 to March 2020). The higher expenditure in Year 1 is necessary as transition to the reduced service (i.e. finding secure accommodation for individuals with complex needs) will be a difficult and lengthy process. The remaining £847,000 pa in Years 2 and 3 would then allow the partners to continue funding all existing local services (in West Oxfordshire: Horsefair) and provide 56 complex needs beds in the City, for the use of all Oxfordshire Authorities. As explained above, WODC utilise around 10% of the current provision (106 complex needs beds) and the proposal therefore cuts WODC's allocation in half; from 10 beds to 5 complex needs beds with effect from 1st April 2017.

As the Council's current complex need allocation is fully utilised it will be necessary for us to make our own local arrangements to address the 50% reduction mentioned in

paragraph 0. Clearly, WODC does not have the facilities, resources or local expertise to support these individuals within the District. However, Oxford City intend to provide additional complex needs beds, outside of the County-wide agreement, as they recognise the potential impact and resultant costs of reducing provision by 50%. There is an opportunity for WODC to commission additional complex needs beds directly from Oxford City Council to bring us, almost, back to current provision. This additional expenditure is therefore included in the financial impact at paragraph 0 below.

The current arrangements also provide 25 beds (based in the City) for the use of all Districts for SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Provision). When temperatures drop below zero the Council can refer rough sleepers in the District, so that they have shelter for the night. It is anticipated that the proposed new arrangements will only be able to accommodate 10 SWEP places for the whole County; meaning a reduction of 60%. This may mean that WODC needs to explore the provision of local SWEP spaces. However, as the reduced provision would commence after winter 2016, it is unlikely that the Council will have need of local SWEP provision until winter 2017 (giving the Council more than a year to explore the need and potential solutions).

The county-wide proposal was considered by a workshop of the Health Improvement Board on 1st July 2016 where it gained unanimous Member support from its seven partner organisations: the four Districts, the City Council, The County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

The District Council has a statutory duty to secure accommodation for single adults who are unintentionally homeless and vulnerable. Where they have support needs, it is extremely difficult to secure accommodation either through a housing association or in the private rented sector unless arrangements are in place for them to receive that support.

Where there is not an obligation to provide accommodation, for example because they are intentionally homeless, there is still a duty to provide advice and assistance so that the person ceases to be rough sleeping. The provision of supported accommodation is a good option as it offers the individual an opportunity to address the issues that led to them being homeless intentionally.

The governance arrangements will remain broadly the same as they currently are. However, a new governance arrangement document has been drafted to reflect the altered funding arrangements. A draft of this document is included as [Appendix B](#) (beginning on page 7). In order to expedite arrangements it is recommended (paragraph 2 (c)), that authority to approve the final governance agreement be delegated to the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support and the portfolio holder.

In order for the Homelessness Prevention Grant to cover this new expenditure it would be necessary to withdraw funding for the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Housing and Debt Project (see paragraph 0). This project is currently funded from the Homelessness Prevention Grant, rather than CAB core grant, at a cost of £32,000 per annum; which funds a CAB officer for 26 hours per week (full-time equivalent salary cost therefore being £45,000 per annum).

The funding for this CAB project was agreed several years ago and is intended to provide additional support for clients with Housing issues. However, since the commencement of the roll-out of Universal Credit, the Revenues and Housing Support Service has developed new internal support resources (Client Support Officers) that can take on parts of this role. There are, however, elements of the CAB provision that WODC is not adequately resourced to in-source (or that it would not be appropriate to in-source). Examples of these elements are the provision of complex debt support and representation at Court for clients subject to eviction/possession orders. However, these elements could be addressed as follows:

- CAB debt advice is a service that forms part of the CAB's core service and core grant funding would not be affected under these proposals. Clients with Housing issues could therefore still access those core CAB services,
- The Council would commission legal representation, or continued CAB representation, for clients subject to eviction/possession orders on an individual need basis (potentially as a jointly funded contract with Cottsway Housing Association). It should be noted that this service is required, on average, for two clients per year and costs would therefore be minimal; and therefore achievable within existing Service budgets.

The possibility that WODC will withdraw funding for this service has already been discussed with the CAB. A decision on this aspect at the 21st September 2016 Cabinet meeting would enable us to give the CAB six months formal notice of the funding withdrawal. Officers will work closely with the CAB to ensure that the impact of the withdrawal of this service is minimised; and that we are not creating the need for future, costly, interventions.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

The District Council could seek to commission its own complex needs provision but it would not be possible to achieve the economies of scale that a county-wide pooled approach would achieve.

The District Council could opt not to commission any future provision for this client group. In view of the statutory duties that would need to be met, temporary accommodation and support would have to be sourced at considerable cost and with no ready 'move-on' options available.

Aside from failing to meet our statutory obligations, the practical implications of opting not to provide any alternative provision would be significant. Any single homeless individuals with complex needs presenting to any other Oxfordshire Council, who had a connection to West Oxfordshire, would be re-directed to the WODC Housing Team to make a local Homelessness Application.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As part of its revenue grant settlement, the government notionally allocates £131,000 per annum for the prevention of homelessness although members will be aware through the financial strategy that the actual Revenue Support Grant is reducing rapidly over the next few years to near zero by 2019/20. This sum is not ring fenced for this purpose, however, £75,000 per annum is provided for within the homelessness budget as a discretionary spending line. This budget is used to grant fund the provision of a Housing and Debt advice project delivered by the CAB, to grant fund an outreach service for rough sleepers and to fund the Council's Deposit Bond and Rent In Advance schemes. Total spending on homelessness prevention amounts to £503,700 in the 2016/17 budget.

The total cost of the proposals, to WODC (i.e. **£59,500 per annum**), breaks down as follows:

- Contribution to the county-wide pool of £33,000 per annum for three years from 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2020,
- Commissioning an additional four complex needs beds (as described in paragraph 0) at a cost of approximately £26,500 per annum for the three years,

By withdrawing the funding for the CAB Housing and Debt project (as described in paragraph 0), it is possible to make available the funding for the recommendations from the existing Homelessness Prevention budget.

There may be a cost to the local SWEP provision (see paragraph 0) with effect from winter 2017. However, it is anticipated that this expenditure will be minimal and, potentially, achievable from within existing Service budgets.

In addition to funding the homeless pathway, the County Council funds the provision of community floating support services in the county including a service in West Oxfordshire. This service meets the needs of the full range of client groups including young people, those with mental health problems and the physically disabled as well as vulnerable families. Floating support is currently delivered to people in their homes rather than being tied to specific accommodation. The County Council is due to consider whether the existing countywide budget of around £800,000 for floating support is also to be further reduced with effect from April 2017.

The future funding of housing related support for victims of domestic abuse is also the subject of a strategic review which is due to make recommendations in October 2016. In addition to the 29 bed spaces in the three refuges in the county, the County Council funds the West Oxfordshire outreach service which has capacity for 15 clients at a cost of £40,000 per annum.

6. RISKS

Any reduction in the number of supported accommodation units for vulnerable single homeless people will have an adverse impact on the Council to meet its statutory obligations in a cost effective manner.

In terms of the partnership and joint commissioning there are further risks:

- That not all partners will agree to join the partnership and contribute to the pooled budget; which would increase costs to the remaining partners,
- That partners all agree to contribute but cannot agree on the commissioning of services, or
- That we attempt to commission new services but no providers bid for the new contracts.

The officer group and the Health Improvement Board Workshop Group are working to minimise these risks by developing a governance structure and implementation plan during September and October 2016 (well in advance of the new contract start date of 1st April 2016).

7. REASONS

The provision of housing related support is one of the Council's corporate priorities in connection with its homelessness prevention strategy.

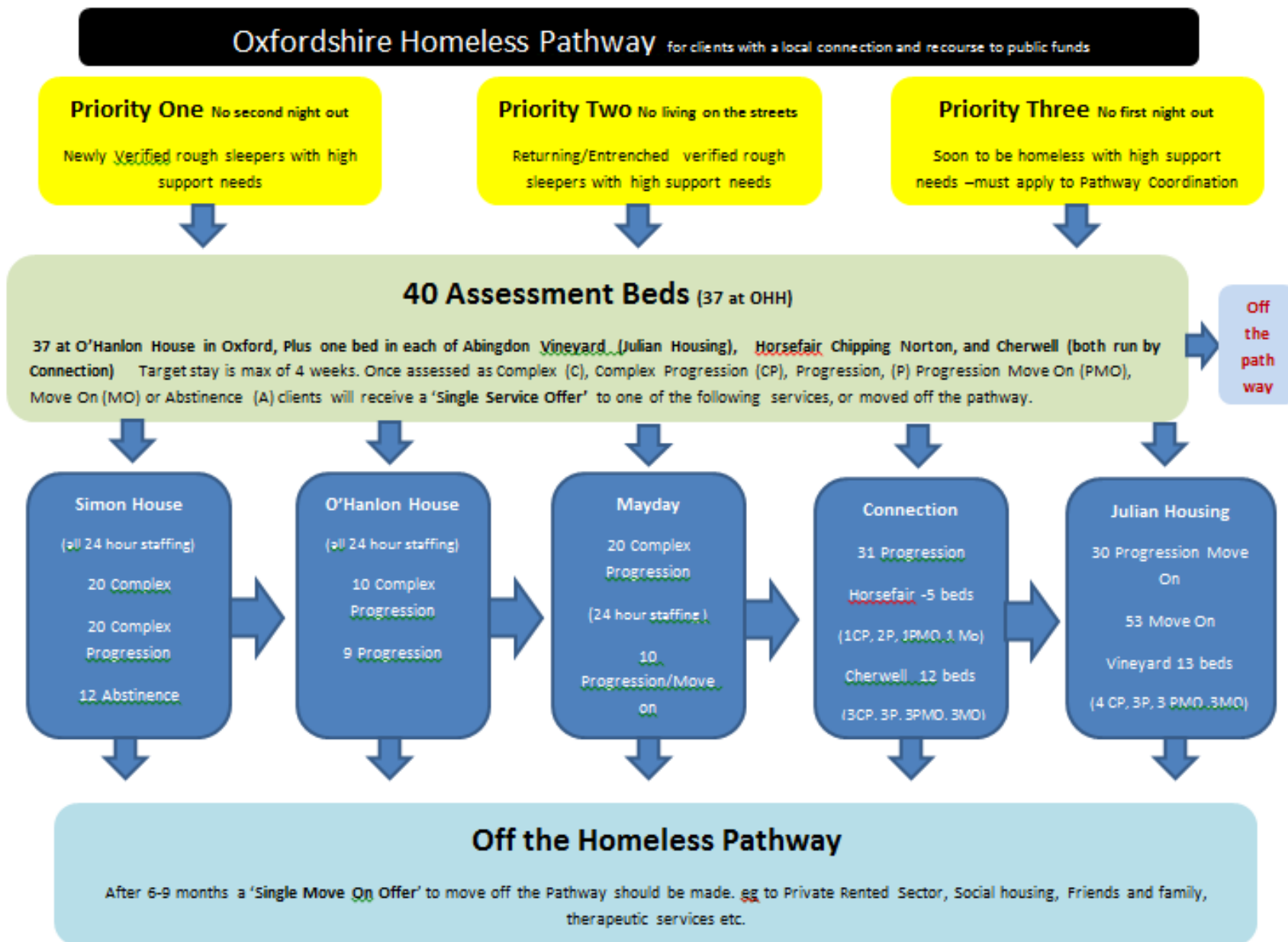
Jon Dearing
Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support

Author: Jon Dearing, Tel: (01993) 861221; email: Jon.Dearing@westoxon.gov.uk

Date: 18 August 2016

Background Papers:

None.



**Housing Related Support Pooled Budget Agreement between
Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning
Group, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, Vale of White
Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and
West Oxfordshire District Council**

for 2017-2020

(v4, 20160622)

Schedule I

The Pooled Fund

1. The pooled budget set out below is intended to deliver the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board / Health Improvement Board priorities for homeless people with support needs and people at risk of becoming homeless.
2. The Health and Wellbeing Board has developed and published a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy covering 2016/2019 which guides the joint commissioning activity of Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.
3. This has identified a key priority for housing related support services:
Priority 10: Tackling the broader determinants of health through better housing and preventing homelessness
4. The Housing Related Support Pooled Fund shall consist of contributions from Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, the Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council to commission services for people at risk of / with history of rough sleeping and homelessness who are deemed in need of housing related support services.
5. Oxfordshire County Council shall be the Host Partner for the Housing Related Support Pooled Fund. The Services delivered shall be housing related support services and specialist services for people at risk of / with history of rough sleeping and homelessness as laid out in Schedule 2.
6. Oxfordshire County Council shall be the Lead Commissioner for these services. The division of responsibility for the commissioning of these Services is set out in Schedule 2.
7. The aim of the Housing Related Support Pooled Fund is to use resources efficiently to commission a range of housing related support services that enable people at risk of / with history of rough sleeping and homelessness to live independently in accommodation; sustain their capacity to live independently; and prevent their needs from escalating, requiring more costly interventions.

8. The Housing Related Support Pooled Fund will be used to commission a range of services, as outlined in Schedule 2, for people at risk of / with history of rough sleeping and homelessness. Most of these people will be of adult age.

Schedule 2

The Services

All Services shall be purchased through, block contracts unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

1. Area Covered

- 1.1 People may be referred to housing related support services if they meet the eligibility criteria as set out in the agreed Oxfordshire Adult Homeless Pathway contract documentation.
- 1.2 From time to time, there may be prospective people who seek referral or are referred by other professionals who are not resident within the county, but have a local connection to Oxfordshire. These referrals will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the local connection criteria for the Oxfordshire Adult Homeless Pathway.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1 All prospective service users will be assessed under clear eligibility criteria for access to the Oxfordshire Adult Homeless Pathway that applies across the county, as outlined in the contract documentation.
- 2.2 People accessing housing related support will be homeless, rough sleeping, or at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping and some may also have mental health problems and complex needs.

3. Charging for services

- 3.1 People receiving housing related support will not be charged for the support services they receive.
- 3.2 The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group will be consulted about any changes to the charging policy.

4. Market development and purchasing approach

- 4.1 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) brings together information and data from various sources and partners about Oxfordshire's population and the factors that affect health, wellbeing and support needs. This is updated annually and creates a shared evidence base for planning and delivering services.
- 4.2 Evidence from the JSNA, together with housing needs data from district councils and the city council, best practice information and the experiences of people receiving housing related support, will inform the development and maintenance of a range of support services to deliver the aims and objectives of this commissioning plan.

4.3 An integrated purchasing approach will be developed by the parties to this agreement. The purchasing of housing related support services from the Pooled Fund will be carried out by a single purchasing team, using County Council procedures and financial assurance.

5. Contracts and quality

5.1 The details of the Service will be specified in Service Contracts entered into by Oxfordshire County Council or where relevant by the other parties to this agreement.

5.2 If health services are commissioned through the Pooled Fund, the clinical quality of the service remains the responsibility of Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Oxfordshire County Council and other parties to this agreement will provide such information as is requested to support the assurance of clinical quality carried out by Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

5.3 Where housing related support services are commissioned through the Pooled Fund then the quality of the service will be the responsibility of the partner contracting for the service. This responsibility can be delegated to any partner through formal agreement at the appropriate Joint Management Group.

5.4 The parties will agree the performance, quality management and reporting processes for those contracts commissioned from the Pooled Fund and ensure that this information is made available via the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group.

6. Scope of services provided from the Housing Related Support Pooled Budget

6.1 The services provided to people eligible for support from the Pooled Fund (as defined above) will vary according to their needs, but are likely to include support to:

- manage money and pay bills
- learn how to follow the rules in a tenancy agreement
- emotional support
- reduce offending, substance misuse or other anti-social behaviour
- access community services, e.g. day services, health services
- access training or education opportunities
- secure alternative accommodation outside of the homelessness pathway.

6.2 The specific services provided and the outcomes they should meet are described in more detail in the commissioning plan produced by the parties to this agreement.

Schedule 3

Financial Resources

I. Purchase Contracts

I.1 The details of the Service will be specified in Service Contracts entered into by Oxfordshire County Council or, where relevant, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group or other parties to this agreement.

2. Housing Related Support Pooled Budget Contributions

2.1 Each party's contribution to the Pooled Fund for the term of this agreement shall be as follows:

Party	2017/18 Contributions	2018/19 Contributions	2019/20 Contributions
Oxford City Council	£161,700	£161,700	£161,700
Cherwell District Council	£62,700	£62,700	£62,700
South Oxfordshire District Council	£36,300	£36,300	£36,300
Vale Of White Horse District Council	£36,300	£36,300	£36,300
West Oxfordshire District Council	£33,000	£33,000	£33,000
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000
Oxfordshire County Council	£1,000,000	£500,000	£0
Total	£1,480,000	£980,000	£480,000

2.2 The district and city council contributions to the Pooled Fund are calculated based on usage of the Oxfordshire Adult Homeless pathway at a snapshot count in February 2016 and are agreed by all partners as a suitable basis for this agreement. The following percentages are proportions of the total contribution to the Pooled Fund from the district and city councils.

District / City Council	Contributions
Oxford City Council	49%
Cherwell District Council	19%
South Oxfordshire District Council	11%
Vale Of White Horse District Council	11%
West Oxfordshire District Council	10%

2.3 The impact of legislative / regulatory changes and national / local policy changes on the contributions made by each party to the Pooled Fund shall be assessed by the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group at the earliest opportunity.

2.4 Where any party has allocated specific savings to the Pooled Fund, a minimum of 6 months' notice will be provided to the other parties and a clear and robust strategy shall be agreed and monitored by the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group to ensure its delivery. Where an appropriate strategy is not in place and sufficient notice is not provided, the party moving the risk into the Pooled Fund will be wholly responsible for funding any non-delivery of the saving.

3. Overspends/Underspends

3.1 The contributions of each party, as set out above, shall be ring-fenced and used to fund services which shall be defined by the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group.

It is the responsibility of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group to ensure that spending is contained within the resources available. Where financial pressures arise in year, the Joint Management Group must look at options to contain total spending within the resources available.

- 3.2 Commissioning approaches will be adopted to eliminate any risk of in-year overspend on contracts. All partners shall agree to the expenditure proposals at contract award stage. The use of block contracts for services shall limit parties' exposure to the financial risk of overspends, as contracted providers shall be liable for any overspend in their delivery of commissioned services.
- 3.3 Any underspend on specified services shall be returned to the Pooled Fund, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. This includes any planned underspend from the Pooled Fund in line with commitments set out in the commissioning plan.
- 3.4 This paragraph (Overspends/Underspends) will be subject to annual review by the parties to this agreement when making decisions about the budget for the Housing Related Support Pooled Fund.

4 Timing of Payments

- 4.1 All parties to this agreement shall make annual payments to the Pooled Fund and to each other for services commissioned on their behalf, subject to receipt of an invoice, unless agreed otherwise.

Schedule 4

Governance and Housing Related Support Joint Management Group

I. Deputies and Quorums

- 1.1 The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group shall comprise members who can vote and make decisions ("Voting Members") and members who may attend meetings but who have no decision-making power and may not vote ("Non-voting Members").
- 1.2 Each Voting Member of the Joint Management Group will have a deputy nominated in writing by the relevant Partner who may attend meetings on behalf of that Voting Member. Such deputies will have authorisation from the respective Partners to take any actions that the Voting Member is authorised to take. Such deputies should be appropriately briefed and with sufficient authority to fulfil the same role and be able to make similarly informed decisions on behalf of the organisation they represent as the Voting Member for whom they are deputising. In exceptional circumstances an alternative deputy will be allowed subject to this being confirmed in writing by one of the Voting Members of the Partner for whom the deputy will act to the Pool Manager prior to or at the start of the meeting and being agreed by the other Partner. Such alternative deputies will have authorisation from the respective Partners to take any actions that the Voting Member is authorised to take.
- 1.3 Meetings will only be considered quorate if there are 5 Voting Members/deputies attending from each of the Partners.

- I.4 Each named representative assigned to a role specified in paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 and/or the role itself may be changed by the body which is being represented by written notification to the other Partners.

2. Role of Housing Related Support Joint Management Group

The role of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group shall be:

2.1 Strategy and Governance

- i. Deliver the objectives set out in the commissioning plan agreed annually by the parties to this agreement;
- ii. Report progress against key outcomes within the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy to the Health Improvement Board;
- iii. Review the operation of this agreement and consider its renewal subject to the terms of any existing contractual commitments under the management of the County Council in its role as Lead Commissioner on behalf of the parties to this agreement;
- iv. Review and consult on a commissioning plan for housing related support, and revise this agreement as appropriate;
- v. Annually and formally agree the contribution made by each party to the Pooled Fund;
- vi. Annually and formally agree commissioning plan for the Pooled Fund.

2.2 Finance

- i. Receive quarterly finance reports from the Pool Manager as set out in this Schedule.
- ii. Agree such variations to this agreement from time to time as it sees fit.
- iii. Review and agree annually revisions to this agreement as required.
- iv. Agree a scheme of financial management with the Pool Manager.
- v. Set such protocols and guidance as it may consider necessary to enable the Pool Manager to approve expenditure from the Pooled Fund.
- vi. Agree urgent decisions which may impact on budget or the ability of parties to deliver services outside of meetings where necessary, with decisions on remedial action to be taken at the next Housing Related Support Joint Management Group meeting.

2.3 Performance

- i. Receive quarterly performance reports from the Pool Manager.
- ii. Consider progress on key objectives as outlined in this agreement and consult further where necessary.
- iii. Approve the quarterly and annual reports on outcomes from the Pool Manager to be submitted by the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group to each party for information.
- iv. Report on progress to stakeholders through the relevant programme or partnership board.

Risk

- a. Review risks quarterly in relation to delivery of objectives, performance of commissioned services, and reputation of the parties in relation to the Pooled Fund.
- b. Review any other risks quarterly relating to the performance of this agreement.

3. Role of Pool Manager

The Pool Manager shall:

- 3.1 submit quarterly finance and performance reports to the Joint Management Group;

- 3.2 submit quarterly and annual reports on finance and performance to the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group for approval and submission to the parties of this agreement;
- 3.3 prepare annual budget and commissioning intentions for approval by the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group;
- 3.4 be responsible for the management of the Pooled Fund on a day-to-day basis; and
- 3.5 report to the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group immediately any forecast overspend or underspend on the Pooled Fund and submit an action plan to bring the budget back into balance or seek guidance from the Joint Management Group on actions to achieve balance.

4. Housing Related Support Joint Management Group Support

- 4.1 The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group will be supported by officers from Oxfordshire County Council who from time to time may be involved in assisting the Joint Management Group in implementation of the aims, objectives and intended outcomes set out in the Housing Related Support Commissioning Plan and the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and performance targets as agreed by the Joint Management Group.

5. Meetings

- 5.1 The Joint Management Group will meet quarterly.
- 5.2 Joint Management Group members will receive an agenda and accompanying reports and papers at least 5 working days before each meeting.
- 5.3 However, it is recognised that on occasions and dependent on dates of meetings it may not always be possible to produce financial reports this far in advance, in which case they will be circulated as far in advance of the meeting as possible.
- 5.4 Joint Management Group members will be provided with Finance and Performance Reports on a monthly basis, and these will be circulated to members irrespective of whether a meeting is taking place that month.
- 5.5 Joint Management Group shall provide regular reports on progress to the Council Cabinet, the Clinical Commissioning Group Board and the District / City Council Cabinets / Executive Groups.

6. Decision Making

- 6.1 All decisions of the Joint Management Group:
 - 6.1.1 shall be made at quorate meetings of the Joint Management Group;
 - 6.1.2 shall be made by those Voting Members present (or their deputies if appointed pursuant to paragraph 1 above); and
 - 6.1.3 shall require the unanimous consent of all Voting Members/Deputies.

- 6.2 Where there is disagreement between the parties regarding an element of the services commissioned the issue shall be escalated for decision by Chief Executives at a County Chief Executives meeting.
- 6.3 All decisions shall be recorded in writing. Minutes of the meetings to include all decisions made shall be kept and copied to the Joint Management Group members by the Pool Manager within 14 days of every meeting.
- 6.4 The views of those in attendance will be taken into account for all of the work of the Joint Management Group including decision making. These views will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. This will include agreement or disagreement to the decisions made by Voting Members.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 From time to time the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group may discuss both financially and commercially sensitive information and client information. It is important that all members of the Joint Management Group and all other attendees are clear that they must treat the information as confidential and must discuss and use such information outside the Joint Management Group only where it is appropriate to do so in order for them to fulfil their obligations.

8. Membership of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group

8.1 Chair

- 8.1.1 The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group will be chaired by one of the Local Housing Authority Voting Members. This responsibility will rotate on an annual basis.
- 8.1.2 The Chair or their nominated deputy will attend meetings of the Health Improvement Board to bring regular reports of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group on performance within the Adult Homeless Pathway and spending from the Pooled Fund

8.2 Voting Members To be confirmed

- 8.2 The membership of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group with voting rights will be as follows:

Oxfordshire County Council:

Commissioning Manager with the lead for housing related support services

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group:

Senior Commissioning Manager

Oxford City Council:

Housing Strategy & Needs Manager

Cherwell District Council:

Housing Needs Manager

Vale of White Horse District Council:

Housing Needs Manager

South Oxfordshire District Council:

Housing Advice Team Leader

West Oxfordshire District Council:

Head of Revenues and Housing Support

8.3 In Attendance: (Non-Voting Members) To be decided

The non-voting members will be as follows:

Oxfordshire County Council:

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group:

Oxford City Council:

Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Manager

Cherwell District Council:

Vale of White Horse District Council:

South Oxfordshire District Council:

West Oxfordshire District Council:

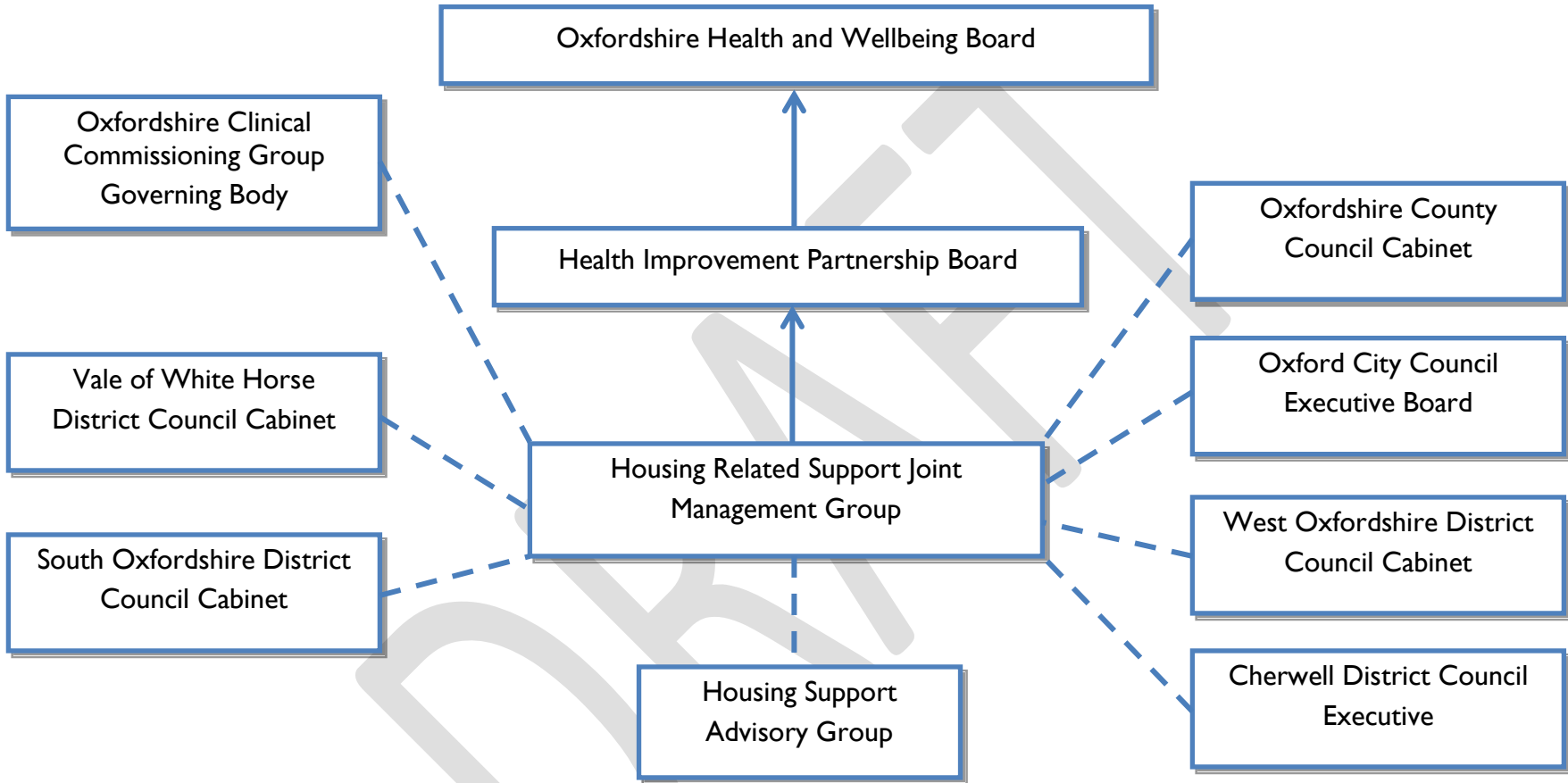
8.4 Other representatives To be decided

The following representatives may be invited to meetings where the Joint Management Group considers appropriate:

9 Housing Related Support Joint Management Group's Relationship to Other Bodies

- 9.1 The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group shall receive expert guidance and advice from the Housing Support Advisory Group to improve and develop housing related support services and inform its commissioning plan. The Housing Support Advisory Group will also advise upon all proposals involving changes to budgets and/or commissioning priorities for the provision of any other housing related support services. This will ensure that the implications of funding and service decisions in one part of the partnership structure can be considered across the whole structure to ensure that there are no unintended adverse consequences for other services.
- 9.2 The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group shall report directly to the Health Improvement Board to support its role in delivering the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 9.3 The reporting lines and relationship of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group to other Boards/Partnerships are outlined below.

Governance framework diagram



**Extract from the minutes of the
Cabinet Meeting held on 21 September 2016**

76. FUTURE FUNDING OF HOMELESS PATHWAY SUPPORTED HOUSING

The Cabinet received and considered the report of the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support regarding the implications of Oxfordshire County Council's decision to reduce countywide funding for supported housing for homeless adults by £1.5m commencing 1st April 2017.

In proposing the recommendations, Mr Courts emphasised that the Council had been faced with an extremely difficult decision and thanked the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support for his efforts in exploring all possible options to find a solution. The Council was seeking to protect the most vulnerable by stepping in to fill the gap created by the Oxfordshire County Council's decision to reduce funding for supported housing for homeless adults. In order to do so it was necessary to identify and utilise funding from elsewhere.

Mr Courts indicated that, despite the proposal to withdraw funding to Citizens Advice, support for clients with housing issues would continue to be provided by the Council through recently developed internal support resources, external provision and Citizens Advice. Mr Courts acknowledged that Citizens Advice provided an extremely valuable service and stressed that their core funding was to be continued. However, it was incumbent upon the Council to make best use of its scarce resources to protect the most vulnerable.

In seconding the proposition, Mrs Baker recognised the importance of the report and thanked Ms Shaw for her contribution to the discussion. She indicated that the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support and his colleagues had worked hard with other authorities to identify alternative ways to address County Council funding cuts. These were difficult choices and Mrs Baker acknowledged the service provided by Citizens Advice and expressed regret at the need to withdraw funding from its Housing and Debt Project. In conclusion, she reiterated that its core funding of £124,000 per annum was unaffected and would still be utilised to support this work.

Mr Langridge concurred, indicating that it was essential to protect the most vulnerable as far as possible. He noted that there was some duplication between the work of the Housing and debt project and the Council's own internal resources and cautioned that this would not be the only difficult decision facing the Council.

Whilst she applauded the desire to protect those most vulnerable, given the potential conflict of interest, Ms Leffman questioned whether the Council was able to provide a comparable service in-house. In response, Mr Courts advised that the Council would offer a two part service. The introduction of choice based lettings had freed up additional staff resources that would be able to offer advice and support directly. However, it would not provide Court representation or legal advice where such a conflict could arise. As indicated in the report, this element of the service would be outsourced.

In response to a further question from Ms Leffman, Mr Courts advised that no decision had yet been taken on the identity of any external service provider.

Mr Cooper questioned the outcome of public consultation and whether the report should have been considered by the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In

response, Mr Courts sought to clarify whether Mr Cooper was making reference to County or District consultation and confirmed that the report had not been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DECISIONS:

- (a) That the Council joins and contributes to the County-wide pool and jointly commissions the proposed reduced service from 1st April 2017 for three years.
- (b) That an additional four complex needs beds be commissioned, in collaboration with Oxford City Council.
- (c) That the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support be authorised to approve the final governance agreement in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing; and
- (d) That notice be given to the Citizens Advice Bureau that funding for the Housing and Debt project will be withdrawn with effect from 1st April 2017.

REASONS: The provision of housing related support is one of the Council's corporate priorities in connection with its homelessness prevention strategy. The Cabinet considered the proposed arrangements to accord with the Council's priority to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.

OPTIONS: None appropriate.