

## Housing Related Support (Homeless Pathway) Update – January 2017

### **1. Introduction**

The current Homeless Pathway was commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council (County) in collaboration with the four Oxfordshire District Councils and Oxford City Council.

County, currently, fully fund the service at a total annual cost of £1,500,000 per annum; and the current contracts with providers commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.

### **2. Homeless Pathway**

The scheme supports single adult homeless individuals with support needs. There are 106 'Complex Needs' beds based in the City, for the use of the whole of Oxfordshire, that provide 24/7 support. Then there are local schemes providing lower level support. The local facility in West Oxfordshire (Horsefair in Chipping Norton) has six beds and there is local provision based within all of the other Districts/City.

WODC fully utilise the local bed provision and (on average) 10% of the Complex Needs beds in the City; so around 10 Complex Needs beds at any one time are occupied by clients with a connection to West Oxfordshire. Both of these strands of support are vitally important to WODC and its response to Homelessness. The Horsefair scheme provides locally based support for those single adults that require a stable environment to enable them to move on to more permanent accommodation. The Complex Needs provision supports those single adults who are homeless and are experiencing several problems at the same time; such as mental ill health, homelessness, drug and 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 the others would still exist. They pose a risk to themselves, others or property, have ineffective contact with services and are living chaotic lives. Clearly WODC does not have the facilities, resources or expertise to support these individuals within the District.

### **3. Change to Arrangements**

Shortly after the commencement of the current contracts the County Cabinet made a decision to withdraw their funding. They will therefore provide £1,000,000 in 2017/18 and £500,000 in 2018/19; and no further funding at all from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

Since this decision was taken officers from the County, the City, the four Districts and the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCC) have been working to develop a plan to retain these vital services.

### **4. Proposed Provision from April 2017**

A County-wide officer group was established to look at the options for addressing these needs from April 2017, when the County's phased funding reduction commences. The approach that had consensus at officer level across the seven partner organisations (and had political approvals during October/November 2016) is that we commission a reduced service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017; pooling the County's reducing contributions, a £150,000 pa contribution from the Oxfordshire Clinical

Commissioning Group and District/City contributions based on the current average service usage for each (in WODC's case, 10%).

How the pool budget income is profiled is shown below:

<b>Housing Related Support Pool Budget Income</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,480,000</b>	<b>£980,000</b>	<b>£480,000</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,940,000</b>

This pooled budget will be used to front-load funding in Year 1 (2017/18) to allow for the transition from the current state to the reduced provision (£1,246,000 in Year 1); leaving £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 will then allow us 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 our allocation in half.

## **5. Additional Complex Needs Provision**

WODC does not have the facilities, resources or expertise to support these individuals within the District and this 50% reduction in complex needs beds does pose a significant problem. 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%. WODC are in negotiations with the City Council to commission additional complex needs beds to bring us back to current provision level (additional cost £26,500 per annum).

## **6. Severe Weather Provision**

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 we can refer rough sleepers in the District, so that they have shelter for the night. It is anticipated that the 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 commences after Winter 2016, it is unlikely that we will have need of local SWEF provision until Winter 2017 (giving us time to explore the need and potential solutions).

## **7. Progress**

The following summarises the progress made to date (Jan 2017):

- The approach has unanimous support from the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board,
- Political approvals for the approach, and the associated finance over the initial three year plan, have been granted within all partner organisations,
- A Partnership Governance Agreement is finalised and about to be signed off by delegated representatives,
- Current providers have been notified of the transition plan and a process consultation meeting took place in December 2016 between the commissioning partners and providers,
- A joint Press Release has been issued,
- Julian Housing have been issued with detailed plans around the complete closure of their provision by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017; with the WODC connected residents having been allocated a dedicated case worker within the Revenues and Housing Support Service,
- County are leading on the re-commissioning process,
- Officers are currently reviewing the Pathway referral and move-on protocols.

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