

Cherwell District Council

Council

20 July 2020

<p>Move-on Plans for Homeless People Accommodated During the Pandemic</p>
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Report of Assistant Director, Housing and Social Care Commissioning

The report is public

Purpose of Report

To outline our plans for helping people accommodated in hotels during the pandemic to move on to settled or interim accommodation and to recommend to Council that budget provision be made to cover these costs.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 Make budget provision of £150,000 in 2020/21 to cover the cost of supporting homeless people to move-on from emergency accommodation post-pandemic, should alternative funding be unavailable.

2.0 Introduction

Tackling Homelessness During the Pandemic

- 2.1 A total of 65 single homeless people and rough sleepers have been accommodated by the District Councils during the pandemic. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) directed local authorities to provide emergency accommodation to people who were sleeping out by 27th March 2020. Since then we have continued to accommodate people verified as rough sleeping or who would be sleeping rough without our help.
- 2.2 Several people have moved on to settled accommodation already or have abandoned the hotel accommodation or refused an offer of accommodation. We are currently accommodating 31 households as a result of covid-19.

- 2.3 In addition we have 39 single people in supported accommodation who were accommodated pre-Covid whom we are also working with to support move-on wherever possible and create capacity in the system. There are also 6 young people who will not be transitioned in the recommissioning of the Young Persons Supported Pathway who are looking to Cherwell for move-on options by the end of September 2020.
- 2.4 Emergency accommodation is being provided at hotels in Oxford, Bicester and Banbury (which arrangements will cease at the end of July) and in our existing contracted temporary accommodation next to the Musketeer in Banbury.
- 2.5 We are focussed on ensuring no one has to return to the streets (wherever possible) and the Housing Team's efforts are focussed on this work.

3.0 Report Details

Move On Plans

- 3.1 To successfully move all rough sleepers and single homeless people accommodated as a result of covid-19 we estimate that the following resources are required :

8 x Housing First placements @ £10k per person/couple per annum = £80k
(NB this is predicated on being able to get registered providers to offer properties that can be used for the Housing First model where a tenancy is offered subject to high level support being put in place).

20 x floating support provision for those being rehoused in the private rented sector and in social housing @ £3.5k per person/couple per annum = £80k

An additional fixed term post to source additional private rented sector accommodation using Cherwell Bond Scheme and to undertake customised negotiation with landlords : 1 full-time equivalent for 12 months including on-costs = £40k

Total = £200k per annum or £150k pro-rata for the remainder of 2020/21.

- 3.2 We expect MHCLG to open a bidding round for capital and revenue funding to support the delivery of housing specifically for rough sleepers. This is part of the Government's pledge to deliver 6,000 homes for rough sleepers, with 3,300 of these to be delivered in 2020/21. Should Cherwell District Council be successful in this bidding round we would expect any revenue funding secured to cover some or all of the estimated move on costs. However this remains an unknown at this stage.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 We expect to make a funding bid to MHCLG for move on support costs but recommend agreeing to fund the necessary move on costs to avoid the risk of rough sleepers returning to the streets.

5.0 Consultation

There has been close joint working with Oxfordshire County Council and the other District Councils to plan move on from hotels and ensure consistent strengths based move on plans are produced for all individuals accommodated.

6.0 Alternative Options

If the costs of supporting move on plans are not covered there is a high likelihood of the majority of rough sleepers returning to the streets in July/August 2020.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Regulatory

- 7.1 The estimated costs of move on are set out at 3.1. If funding cannot be secured via a bid to MHCLG it would need to be found by the District Council from existing resources.

Comments checked by : Dominic Oakeshott, Assistant Director (Interim) – Finance. Email : dominic.oakeshott@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation for budget allocation which forms the subject of this report.

Comments checked by: Richard Hawtin, Team Leader – Non-contentious. Email: richard.hawtin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, Telephone: 01295 221695

Risks

- 7.3 As identified, there is a high risk of the majority of rough sleepers returning to the streets post covid-19 if we are unable to support move-on in to interim accommodation, tenancies with floating support and Housing First tenancies.

Comments checked by: Celia Prado-Teeling, Team Leader – Performance. Email: celia.prado-teeling@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, Telephone: 01295 221556

8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Housing that meets your needs – support the most vulnerable people

Lead Councillor

Cllr John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing

Cllr Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	
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