



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Tuesday, 19 August 2025 at 11.30 am

Room 3 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on Friday 22 August unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

August 2025

Committee Officer:

Email:

committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 16 September 2025

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak on an item on the agenda at this meeting, or present a petition, can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to present a petition must be submitted no later than 9am ten working days before the meeting.

Requests to speak must be submitted no later than 9am three working days before the meeting.

Requests should be submitted to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9am on the day of the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

4. Young Peoples Supported Accommodation (YPSA) - Contract Extensions (Pages 1 - 8)

Cabinet Member: Children and Young People

Forward Plan Ref: 2025/089

Contact: Caroline Kelly, Lead Commissioner Start Well

(Caroline.Kelly@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Report by Director of Children's Services (**CMDCYP4**)

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- a) To delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal and Governance, to extend the YPSA contracts for 18 months from 1st October 2025 to 30th April 2027.**

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

Members Code – Other registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships

- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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Divisions Affected - All

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

19 August 2025

Young Peoples Supported Accommodation (YPSA) Contract Extensions

Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to

- a) **To delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal and Governance, to extend the YPSA contracts for 18 months from 1st October 2025 to 30th April 2027.**

Executive Summary

1. The commissioned block YPSA contracts are due to expire on 30th September 2025 however there is an option to extend the contracts for a further 18 months until the 30th April 2027.
2. The YPSA is currently a mixed delivery model of services for young people aged 16-25 which includes shared accommodation, self-contained single accommodation and accommodation for parent/s and children. The YPSA contracts referred to in this report are for support only, the accommodation provided under these contracts is governed by a tenancy agreement between the young person and the Provider. The young person funds the accommodation costs, for the majority of young people this is via Housing Benefit.
3. The aim of the YPSA is to enable young people in Oxfordshire who need supported accommodation to gain and maintain independence skills, to be facilitated into education, employment or training and to gain the knowledge and skills to make informed choices about their accommodation options outside of the YPSA. The YPSA is also used to support 'Staying Close' and duties for Care Leavers as part of the *Children Act guidance and regulations Volume 3: "Planning transition to adulthood for care leavers"* guidance¹.
4. A thorough review of the YPSA with internal and external stakeholders including

¹ [The Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations](#)

providers and young people was completed in late 2024.

Service

5. The Council commissions the majority of its YPSA services for young people aged over 18 (16+ for Parents) from 6 providers who deliver 203 units of support and accommodation across Oxfordshire.
6. The contract supports both care leavers who are the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council to support and for young people aged 18+ who are not Care experienced. These young people fall under the City and District Councils housing statutory duties and support the partnership approach to tackling youth homelessness across the County. The City and District Councils pay the Council for any beds utilised up to an agreed limit set by the City and District Councils, this is currently approximately £400k per year.
7. The YPSA services commenced on the 1st October 2020, after a full procurement exercise.

The table below shows a breakdown of the total number of units in each of the services.

Table 1: Number of current beds per Service

Contract	Provider	Current No. of Beds
18+ Singles - South	Connection Support	6
18+ Singles - City	Connection Support	10
18+ Singles - Cherwell	Connection Support	6
18+ Singles -West	Stonewater	3
18+ Singles - Vale	Stonewater	3
Total Singles Provision		28
18+ Parents - City	A2 Dominion	10
16+ Parents - Vale	Stonewater	5
18+ Parents – Cherwell	Sanctuary	10
18+ Parents - West	A2 Dominion	5
18+ Parents – South*	A2 Dominion	5
Total Parents Provision		35
18+ Shared – All Areas	Response	119
18+ Shared - South	Homegroup	11
Total Shared Provision		130
Out of County – Care Leavers only	Connection support	10
Total YPSA Provision		203

**this service is has been used for unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) since April 2025 as this property was vacant at the time*

8. Oxfordshire County Council are planning to extend the following contracts from the 1st October 2025 for 2 years to the value of £4,335,883.

Table 2: Contract changes from 1st October 2025:

Contract	Provider	Current No. of Beds	Changes	From 1st October 25 No. of Beds
18+ Singles - South	Connection Support	6	Extend by 18 months	6
18+ Singles - City	Connection Support	10	Extend by 18 months	10
18+ Singles - Cherwell	Connection Support	6	Extend by 18 months	6
18+ Singles -West	Stonewater	3	Extend by 18 months	3
18+ Singles - Vale	Stonewater	3	Extend by 18 months	3
Total Singles Provision		28		28
18+ Parents - City	A2 Dominion	10	Extend by 18 months	10
16+ Parents - Vale	Stonewater	5	Extend by 18 months	5
18+ Parents – Cherwell	Sanctuary	10	Extend by 18 months	10
18+ Parents - West	A2 Dominion	5	Do not extend – mutually agreed with provider	0
18+ Parents – South*	A2 Dominion	5	Do not extend – mutually agreed with provider	0
Total Parents Provision		35		15
18+ Shared – All Areas	Response	119	Extend by 18 months but on a reduction of bed no. to be mutually agreed with provider	90*
18+ Shared - South	Homegroup	11	Extend by 18 months	11
Total Shared Provision		130		102
Out of County – Care Leavers only	Connection support	10	Do not extend – mutually agreed with provider	0
Total YPSA Provision		203		154*

**final contract numbers to be agreed mutually with Response but will be no less than 90 beds.*

9. There are important reasons for not extending all of the current contracts. These include low occupancy numbers due to location and type of provision and low waiting lists. There are 20 young people living in these identified services, with decommissioning plans in place for each young person to take

into account their individual housing and support needs. Either moving them to another supported housing scheme if required or prioritising them to move on into general needs accommodation through the relevant District/City Housing registers or by supporting them to access the private rented sector. On a case by case basis there could be one off discretionary use for assistance with rent guarantee, deposits and liaising with landlords/lettings agencies (provided by both Children's Services for Care Leavers and the relevant District/City for those without care leaver status).

10. Oxfordshire County Council and the District and City Councils could if necessary, consider discretionary spot purchase of a placement on a limited and case by case basis after the 1st October 2025 on a case by case basis to avoid homelessness if necessary up to a period of up to 6 months. This use of one off, case by case arrangements would apply to this specific cohort of young adults in the transition arrangements and would not be an ongoing approach.
11. Reducing the number of surplus beds on the YPSA is also contributing to a key Council wide savings plan for 2025/26 – signed off by full Council during the budget setting process for 2025/26 any spot purchasing may have a temporary or short term impact to the agreed savings delivery plan.
12. Extending the 18+ YPSA contracts as set out in table 2 (*including 16+ Parents service with Connection Support who are OFSTED registered*) for 18 months would allow sufficient time to remodel and recommission these services. The 18 month extension will provide ample time to engage with stakeholders, including the District/City Councils and the young people themselves, service providers, and social care staff. Their input is invaluable in shaping the future of supported accommodation services and ensuring that they are effective and responsive.
13. The recommissioning work for all young people supported housing including the YPSA would start during the Autumn of 2025.
14. A number of variations will be made to the extended contracts to provide clarifications and also include revised age range changes to reduce the age limit for new referrals only from 25 to 21 years of age. As set out in paragraph 9 a plan is in place jointly with providers and the District and City Council's for young people to support them to move on if they no longer require supported housing via the private rented sector or via the relevant district/city housing register. Young people will not be made homeless as a result of being aged over 21 years however we will no longer accept referrals for any young person into the service aged 21+.
15. If the contracts were not extended on the 30th September 2025 for the majority of young people housed in the YPSA there would be no alternative option for accommodating the young people and would therefore risk the young people becoming homeless.

Financial Implications

16. These services are funded by Children's Social Care and any beds that referred to from the District / City Councils are re-charged each financial year.
17. The contracts that will be extended for 2 years are listed below (pt.20).
18. The collective annual budget for 2025/26 and 2026/27 is £4,335,883. £2,146,476 for year 1 and £2,189,406 for year 2 taking into account a 2% uplift.
19. These contracts are for support only, accommodation costs are funded by young people and for the majority this is via Housing Benefit payments.
20. These costs do not include any forecast reimbursement by the City and District Councils.
21. If any spot purchasing is required this may affect Oxfordshire County Councils delivery of the savings plan however this will be time limited.
22. Breakdown of the 2025/26 and 2026/27 budget required:

Contract	Provider	No. of Beds	Year 6: Oct 25 - Sept 26 Annual Cost	Year 7: Oct 26 - Sept 27 Annual Cost
18+ Singles - South	Connection Support	6	99,997.74	101,997.69
18+ Singles - City	Connection Support	10	161,166.12	164,389.44
18+ Singles - Cherwell	Connection Support	6	96,594.00	98,525.88
18+ Shared - South	Homegroup	11	153,000.00	156,060.00
18+ Singles Vale & 16+ Parents Vale	Stonewater	8	126,861.48	129,398.71
18+ Singles -West	Stonewater	3	57,351.54	58,498.57
18+ Parents - City	A2 Dominion	10	142,907.10	145,765.24
18+ Shared – All Areas	Response	90	1,158,122.29	1,181,284.74
18+ Parents - Cherwell	Sanctuary	10	150,476.52	153,486.05
		144	£2,146,476.79	£2,189,406.32

Comments checked by: Jane Billington, Strategic Finance Business Partner (finance) Jane.Billington@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

23. The Council's statutory duties to provide support services and accommodation for the categories of young people defined in the relevant contracts are set out in the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 as defined in the Pathway Plan to support their assessed needs. For the majority of young people covered by the contracts the provision of accommodation is by way of separate tenancy agreement between the young person and the provider and rent is the responsibility of the young person.

24. From a procurement law perspective, the contract extensions are clearly permitted under the terms and conditions of the original contracts. They are therefore compliant with the Council's Contract procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended).

Comments checked by: Jonathan Pool, Solicitor (contracts), Legal Services
Jonathan.Pool@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

25. For services that are not being extended/reduced on the 1st October there will be staff redundancies and this process is being managed by the provider.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

26. As these are existing services, the contract extensions do not negatively impact on people in Oxfordshire.
27. For those affected by de-commissioning of services and changes to the upper age limit, implementation plans are in place to safely move young people into alternative accommodation arrangements based on their identified need and legal status and homelessness will be avoided at all costs.

Risk Management

28. As part of the review process see below a table of benefits and risks.

Options	Benefits	Risks
Option 1 - do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to accommodate young people in an established service until 30th September 2025 when the contract expires	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Young people could be made homeless by 30th September 2025
Option 2 – extend the contracts (with agreed variations) <i>for 18 months</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The contracts provide a good quality service at a reasonable priceVariations will manage the issues that have been apparent within the current contractAllows time to fully re-commission and implement a new serviceThe option to extend is supported by City and District Council housing departments however they have voiced	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Providers may not want to continue to deliver servicesProviders objecting to decommissioning plans/variations

	<p>concerns over the reduction in upper age limit and decommissioning plans. Oxfordshire County Council are working with the District and City Councils on an implementation plan to safely transition to the new arrangements avoiding homelessness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents providers from uplifting bed prices beyond the agreed percentage built into the contract 	
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Director of Children's Services

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August 2025

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