

## Area Based Grant (ABG)

### Background

1. The government decided to pool hitherto separate, specific and ring-fenced grants to local authorities into one single Area Based Grant (ABG) in order to give more flexibility and freedom at the local level. The Department for Communities and Local Government advise that ABG can be used to meet priorities agreed with partners and there is no requirement to report back to government on its use. [However, not all government departments have recognised this: for example the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health expect that some grants should continue to be spent on the purposes originally agreed, and that councils should continue to report on their use.]
2. The table below sets out how much Oxfordshire money is included in the ABG and details of the particular former ring-fenced grants pooled into the ABG are set out in **Annex 1**.

Council	2008-09 £000s	2009-10 £000s	2010-11 £000s
Oxfordshire County Council	26,004	26,950	42,572*
Oxford City Council	202	207	213
Cherwell District Council	48	70	97
South Oxfordshire District Council	22	22	22
Vale of White Horse District Council	22	22	22
West Oxfordshire District Council	22	22	22

\* includes Supporting People grant for the first time

3. In 2008–2009 the county council passported ABG to the services and partnerships who received the original grants, stating that there should be agreement at thematic partnership level for any proposed changes in the way these monies are spent.  
[The relevant extract from the [18 February meeting of the Public Service Board](#) (PSB) minutes, concerning the opportunities/ consequences of reallocating the funding, are included in **Annex 3**.]
4. On 19 March 2009, the HWBP Board discussed the fact that this has given the Health & Well Being Partnership the potential to spend the monies pooled into the single ABG pot differently, in order to resource its agreed priorities. At that meeting the Board were reluctant to make any immediate changes to the pattern of spending, in recognition of current services' reliance upon that money, and recommended John Jackson to bring back a report to a future meeting to help elicit the Board's views. Such information is provided in the table below.

**John Jackson's comments to Oxfordshire Public Service Board 18 February 2009 regarding Social & Community Services use of Area Based Grant**

<p><b>Summary of funding in the block – how much in total, what are the biggest elements?</b></p> <p>See Annex 1 for background information</p>	<p>The grants for adult social care fall into three categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grants which provide core funding to pay for services to adults with learning disabilities (Preserved Rights <sup>1</sup> £2.794m) and adults with mental health problems (Mental Health Grant <sup>2</sup> £1.233m). These are longstanding grants which reflect the transfer of responsibility from the National Health Service or a policy decision by the Department of Health to increase funding for mental health services which has often been seen as a “Cinderella” service.</li> <li>2. Grants which support services that directly help service users and carers. These are the grants which fund the carers centres and other services in Oxfordshire (Carers Grant <sup>3</sup> £1.795m); the grant which funds work to support those who do not have the mental capacity to act on their behalf (Mental Capacity Advocacy Service <sup>4</sup> £283k); the grant that supports services commissioned by the Learning Disability Partnership Board which is one of the key means of involving adults with learning disabilities and their carers (Learning Disability Development Fund <sup>5</sup> £367k). All three of these grants have been in place for a number of years. The Carers Grant has been increased significantly in recent years reflecting the national focus on support for carers.</li> <li>3. The grant which funds the Local Involvement Network <sup>6</sup> (£223k). This is a recent statutory requirement for the County Council to commission a host organization to support the Local Involvement Network which replaced the former Patient and Public Forum (PPF). The grant pays for the costs of the host organization.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Implications of moving resources.</b></p> <p>Impact on targets, failure to meet statutory requirements, deliver key services, deliver LAA/ Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan?</p>	<p>The implications differ depending on the category:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reducing the grant would mean that there are fewer resources to spend on these services and would directly impact on key performance targets as assessed by inspectors. The increasing number of adults with learning disabilities is highlighted in Oxfordshire 2030 and is causing considerable financial pressure for both the County Council and the PCT who are not receiving extra funding from central government in response to this demographic pressure. There are major financial pressures on the pooled budget despite the delivery of very significant efficiency savings and the commitment to deliver further savings. The needs of those with mental health problems are also highlighted in Oxfordshire 2030. This has been identified as one of the key</li> </ol>

	<p>priorities for the Health &amp; Well-Being Partnership Board. It is also important to note that making progress on addressing the needs of those with mental health problems is also likely to help with achieving the Oxfordshire Partnership priority of delivering a world class economy by bringing into the workforce, people with considerable talents and skills who are currently not employed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Reductions in these grants would have an impact on service users and carers. It would impact on the LAA2 target to increase the proportion of carers receiving a service and would lead to adverse criticism by inspectors. Any proposed change should also be subject to consultation with services users and carers.</li> <li>3. There are mixed views locally on the potential benefits of this development. However, it is a statutory requirement. In addition, without a Local Involvement Network there is no alternative mechanism to obtain the views of patients of NHS services. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have views on this possible issue.</li> </ol> <p>Any possible changes should be subject to discussions at the Health &amp; Well-Being Partnership Board (which involves service users and carers) (and in the case of 3 (above) with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee).</p>
<p><b>Proposals for moving resources.</b></p> <p>What can be done in the short-term and in the longer-term?</p> <p>We need to demonstrate a willingness to move at least 10% of ABG in the short-medium term.</p>	<p>Services for adults with learning disabilities have been transformed over the last 5 years which leaves relatively few options available (and these will need to be pursued to respond to the existing financial pressures on the pooled budget). It may be possible to look to see what further changes could be made to the delivery of mental health services possibly by applying some of the approaches that have been adopted within learning disability services. However, there are potential benefits from expanding services for those who have mental health benefits to address this partnership priority so any released resources could usefully be used within mental health.</p> <p>It would not be appropriate to comment now on the implications of reducing spending on services which support service users, carers or patients without consulting them first. My expectation is that they would be concerned at the possible lose of support but they may be able to suggest ways in which the services could be delivered in a more efficient way.</p>
<p><b>Proposals for further review work by or for the appropriate partnership(s)</b></p>	<p>See above.</p>

## Area Based Grant process for 2010–11

5. The Public Service Board (PSB) was informed of the HWBP Board's decision not to make any changes for 2009–10.
6. In the past, many of the funding streams that comprise the Area Based Grant were part of the funding for core council services/ posts, rather than partnership activity. However, current government expectation is that ABG be used to support delivery of partnership priorities. At their 06 July meeting the PSB agreed an annual process, which addressed the use of ABG, for ensuring that all targets adopted for the Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan (including Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets and local targets) are fully resourced.  
[The relevant extract from the [06 February meeting of the Public Service Board](#) (PSB) minutes, concerning this process, are included in **Annex 3**.]
7. The process for the allocation of Area Based Grant funding for 2010–11 is set out as follows:
  - The county council's finance service to coordinate the analysis of the ABG received by the county council for 2010–11.
  - District councils in receipt of ABG to do the same.
  - District and county councils shall co-ordinate their activities through the Oxfordshire Treasurers Group who would ensure information was provided for thematic partnerships (see activity and timescale below).

Activity	Timescale
County and district council services in receipt of ABG shall provide details of proposed activity/ spend in financial year 2010–2011.	Submitted to the relevant thematic partnership for consideration by 31 August 2009.
The relevant thematic partnerships shall test these proposals and make any recommendations that can improve the effectiveness of the use of ABG.	By 18 September 2009.
ABG plans shall be considered by county & district council budget planning processes.	For information the county council budget "star chamber" process is 28 Sept – 16 Oct 2009.

## Implications for HWBP Board

8. The Public Service Board has agreed that all thematic partnerships should be consulted on the spending plans for Area Based Grant in 2010/11, in order to "ensure transparency, opportunity for challenge and to seek opportunities to join up resources most effectively". Proposed activity and spend for the financial year 2010–2011 is set out in **Annex 2**.  
*(Note that, partly as a result of the tight timescale, there are no data relating to Cherwell, South Oxon and Vale of White Horse District Councils, as yet. When this is received it will be circulated asap.)*
9. The Board is asked to comment on the process set out above and in particular to make any recommendations to improve the effectiveness of spend against the ABG (noting the requirement to demonstrate a willingness to move at least 10% of ABG in the short-medium term). All responses and comments will be considered alongside proposals in the county council and district councils' budget planning processes.

## Details of the original grants since pooled into the Area Based Grant 2008-2011

<b>Oxfordshire County Council</b>			
	<b>2008-09 £000s</b>	<b>2009-10 £000s</b>	<b>2010-11 £000s</b>
Carers Grant (Adult) <sup>3</sup>	1,669	1,795	1,922
Mental Capacity Advocacy Service <sup>4</sup>	223	283	273
Mental Health Grant <sup>2</sup>	1,171	1,233	1,296
Preserved Rights <sup>1</sup>	2,893	2,794	2,693
Learning Disability Development Fund <sup>5</sup>	367	367	368
Local Involvement Networks <sup>6</sup>	222	223	223
Supporting People - Administration	406	374	320
Supporting People	0	0	16,167
<b>Social and Community Services Total – £000s</b>	<b>6,951</b>	<b>7,069</b>	<b>23,262</b>
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Families Total – £000s</b>	<b>12,316</b>	<b>13,160</b>	<b>12,504</b>
<b>Environment &amp; Economy Total – £000s</b>	<b>4,680</b>	<b>4,619</b>	<b>4,660</b>
<b>Community Safety Total – £000s</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>652</b>
<b>Shared Services Total – £000s</b>	<b>1,405</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>1,494</b>
<b>Oxfordshire County Council Total – £000s</b>	<b>26,004</b>	<b>26,950</b>	<b>42,572</b>

<b>District Councils</b>			
<b>Oxford City Council</b>	<b>2008-09 £000s</b>	<b>2009-10 £000s</b>	<b>2010-11 £000s</b>
Preventing Violent Extremism	105	110	116
Youth Taskforce	75	75	75
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	22
<b>Oxford City Council Total – £000s</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>213</b>

<b>Cherwell District Council</b>			
Cohesion	26	48	75
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	22
<b>Cherwell District Council Total – £000s</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>South Oxfordshire District Council</b>			
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	22
<b>South Oxfordshire District Council Total – £000s</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

<b>Vale of White Horse District Council</b>			
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	22
<b>Vale of White Horse District Council Total – £000s</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

<b>West Oxfordshire District Council</b>			
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	22
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council Total – £000s</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

## Area Based Grant: proposed activity and spend for the financial year 2010–2011

Originating Specific Grant	Allocation within ABG		Description of activities planned in 2010/11			Estimated spend £000
	2009-10 £000	2010-11 £000	Activities / projects	Staffing	What links exist with thematic partnerships?	
<b><u>OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL</u></b>						
Carers Grant (Adult)	1,795	1,922	Carers support services; carers voice; breaks projects; internal services OP/PD/LD/MH; carers administration posts; information and involvement.	18.5 hrs Carers Dev Officer, 30 hrs Carers Dev Officer, 18.5 hrs ECSS Dev Officer PLUS CARERS SUPPORT STAFF APPROX 38.5 FTE	Strategic links with all Health and Well Being partners through the Carers Strategy Steering group. Attendance at HWBP Officer Group meeting and employment focused planning groups.	1,922
Mental Capacity Advocacy Service	283	273	Training for Health and Social Care on Mental Capacity Act (MCA). Expert advice and supervision on DOL & MCA provisions. Administration of Supervisory bodies for Health and Social care. Provision of advocacy service.	1) MCA Training and information: 0.75 FTE Unit Manager, 0.5 FTE Administrator 2) Deprivation of liberty Safeguards 0.25 FTE Unit Manager; 1 FTE Supervisory body Specialist Administrator, 0.5 FTE general administrator 3) IMCA service (Independent Mental Capacity Act Service) 1 FTE Manager 4-6 Sessional specialists non instructed advocates.	PCT and all Health Trusts and providers of residential care and housing.	273
Mental Health Grant	1,233	1,296	Statutory Mental health services including AMHP payments Community Support Staff and service Overheads costs in OBMH.	AMHP staff CMHT staff.	Links through the MHSIG and Health & Well Being Partnership Officer group to the mental wellbeing strategy.	1,296

Preserved Rights	2,794	2,693	£273,975 Older People, £73,203 Integrated Mental Health, £40,271 Services for all client groups, £316,111 Physical Disabilities, £1,989,440 Learning Disabilities, In most cases the Preserved Rights Grant forms part of the base funding for the pooled budgets and not identifiable separately.			2693
Learning Disability Development Fund	367	368	Supports service, and wider community, change in Learning Disability to meet Valuing People Now objectives; managed through the LD Partnership Board and mostly spent on small scale initiatives and pilots initiating larger scale change in mainstream provision. Examples: better access to health services, pilot project to provide more flexible respite care, family support network, accessible information project, transition care managers, circles of support, employment initiative, dating and friendship agency, self-advocacy, supporting learning disabilities parents through child protection issues.	Valuing People Manager to support the LD Partnership Board, and wider partnerships; via secondment arrangements 2 x part-time Strategic Health Facilitators to work with Acute Hospitals and GPs respectively; other staffing is supported through partner organisations as part of projects/ grants.	Improving Peoples Health; increased choice and control, improved quality of life, increased employment opportunity, people being supported to live independently at home; Better use of resources - mainly prevention focussed projects; Value for Money; Supporting People to Live at Home, TASC.	368
Local Involvement Networks	223	223	Core objectives of activities and projects are: to promote public involvement across local Social Care & Health services, explore and record people's experiences of services, assess whether improvements or changes may be needed and to make findings known. Personalisation agenda will be a specific Local Involvement Network (LINK) project running through 2010-11.	4.7 FTE covering LINK locality manager, development officers, communications and online support and administration.	Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board, Mental Health Service Users and Carers, Learning Disability, Older Adults.	223

Supporting People – administration	374	320	See cell below.	Subject to current restructure: 1 Grade 16; 2 Grade 11; 1 Grade 9; 1.9 Grade 6.	See cell below.	320
Supporting People	0	16,167	Implement new services for older people (with S&CS), young people & teenage parents (with CYPF), and homeless people. Procure new services for people with mental health problems (with PCT). Commission new services for people with physical disabilities. Deliver £528k savings in generic floating support services.	3.4 Grade 12 temporary, fixed-term posts all finishing at different dates.	Relationship between Supporting People Commissioning Body and Health & Well Being Partnership agreed in July. Manager from SP team added in August to Health & Well Being Partnership officer group. Links being strengthened with Children's and Safer Communities.	16,167
<b>S&amp;CS TOTAL</b>	<b>7,069</b>	<b>23,262</b>				<b>23,262</b>
De-trunking of Non-Core Routes	1,703	1,746	Maintenance & repair of the Trunk Road Carriageways throughout Oxfordshire.	Many staff involved in the work, but the grant doesn't directly fund these.	None	1,746
Road Safety Partnerships	1,190	1,145	Operate and maintain mobile and static speed cameras. Undertake road safety education projects on our behalf in partnership with other highway authorities in the Thames Valley area.	Partially funds partnership staff and temporary E&E posts.	Delivered in partnership with Police, Fire and Rescue and Highways Agency.	1,145
Rural Bus Services Grant	1,634	1,676	Used to fund subsidies to operators for Rural Bus Routes throughout the County.	Several staff involved in co-ordinating this work and the grant directly funds 2-3 posts.	None	1,676
School Travel Advisors Grant	92	92	Funds staff to work with the County's schools to reduce car-based trips in order to help meet the LAA2 indicator (NI 198).	Approx 3 staff (2.5 FTE) work on this and are funded by the grant.	Health & Well Being Partnership; Children's Trust.	92
<b>E&amp;E TOTAL</b>	<b>4,619</b>	<b>4,659</b>				<b>4,659</b>

Stronger Safer Communities Fund	652	652	The ABG will exclusively fund activities and posts dedicated to tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime across the county through prevention, intervention and enforcement. Key priorities are: alcohol, drugs, domestic abuse, prolific and priority offenders and young people. Hate crime/cohesion is another focus. The ABG is split between five Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships.	Around 25 posts, including the County Domestic Abuse Coordinator and DV outreach workers, Crime Reduction Advisers and Anti-social Behaviour Officers are funded through the ABG.	Activity links directly to the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership through its Officer Group and the 5 Tactical Business Groups which support the key priorities; to the Children and Young People Partnership, Health & Well Being/ Supporting People Partnership and Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Partnership.	652	
<b>Community Safety TOTAL</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>652</b>					<b>652</b>
Children's Social Care Workforce	138	138	This grant will be used to support activities delivered as part of the Learning and Development Plan. Specific activities relating to the Children's Social Care Workforce include the Foster Carer Programme, a rolling programme of activities for qualified social workers and safeguarding children courses for all staff who have contact with children.	This grant contributes towards the funding of the Learning and Development Team.	no direct links.	138	
Adult Social Care Workforce	1,312	1,356	This grant will be used to support activities delivered as part of the Learning and Development Plan. Specific activities relating to the Adult Social Care Workforce include the induction of Home Support Workers and staff working within the Private Care Sector, supporting the Private Care Sector in raising standards and qualification levels and delivering a rolling programme of development for qualified social workers.	This grant contributes towards the funding of the Learning and Development Team.	no direct links.	1,356	
<b>Shared Services TOTAL</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>1,494</b>					<b>1,494</b>

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Preventing Violent Extremism	110	116	Community-based projects that support the Oxford PVE Strategy. School-based, women's groups, learning packages, Mosque governance.	0	Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership. Pledge in 2030.	116
Youth Taskforce	75	75	Positive Futures programme - referral and deprivation targeted activities for young people at risk of offending. Family Support Coordinator.	1	Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership.	75
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	West End Dry Access Study – to assist in bringing forward development in the West End area of Oxford. Large portions which are in areas of flood risk, and this study will assist in moving the sites forward. Brook Modelling work to support the Barton Area Action Plan - to examine part of the strategic site at Barton. It will feed into the Area Action Plan and look at how part of the site can be physically remodelled in order to bring the site forward for housing. Part funding of the Development Management DPD: renewables viability testing – to inform the production of the Development Management DPD. It will support and provide an evidence base for the Code for Sustainable Homes standards, which go beyond the Building Regulations. Included in the Code for Sustainable Homes standards are energy efficiency measures, as well as water efficiency targets and standards. Funding of the Sustainable Buildings Award - to celebrate sustainability in buildings across the city of Oxford.		Pledge 18: Minimising the effects and risks of flooding. NI 188	6.5
					Pledge 18: Minimising the effects and risks of flooding. NI 188	7
					Pledge 19: High Environmental Standards Pledge 16: Reduce CO2 emissions. NI 185	8
					Pledge 19: High Environmental Standards	0.5

Oxford City TOTAL	207	213				213
<b><u>WEST OXFORDSHIRE</u></b>						
Climate Change (Planning Policy Statement)	22	22	Production of an application checklist (with guidance) which applicants need to satisfy before planning applications are registered. Computer software with training of officers involved (consultants CAG have been asked to advise on this). Actions arising from work commissioned with Cherwell DC as part of 2009/10 commitments to Planning Policy Statement. Renewables feasibility study to be used to inform planning decisions and provide clear advice to households. Informs Local Development Framework and Planning decisions.	Additional support specialist staff (short-term) perhaps shared with another local authority.		22
West Oxfordshire TOTAL	22	22				22
<b><u>CHERWELL</u></b>						
Cherwell TOTAL	70	97				97
<b><u>SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE</u></b>						
South Oxfordshire TOTAL	22	22				22
<b><u>VALE OF WHITE HORSE</u></b>						
Vale of White Horse TOTAL	22	22				22

## OXFORDSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD

*NOTES of a meeting held on Wednesday 18 February 2009 starting at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.40 pm record the following decision:*

### Item 6

#### Area Based Grant 2008-2011

It was agreed that:

- The County Council should passport ABG to services in financial years 2009-2010, and 2010-2011. However, spending plans would be discussed with partnerships and published in each financial year to ensure transparency, opportunity for challenge and to seek opportunities to join up resources most effectively.
- Inform GOSE of any ABG funding streams where government departments were still expecting the funding to be ring-fenced against its original purpose and reported on.
- Support further partnership governance work to develop an annual process for ensuring that all targets adopted for the Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan (including LAA and local targets) were fully resourced and report back to the June meeting.

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*NOTES of a meeting held on Monday 6 July 2009 starting at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.25 pm record the following decision:*

### Item 5

#### Area Based Grant

It was agreed that:

- The county council's finance service to coordinate the analysis of the ABG received by the county council for 2010/11.
- District councils in receipt of ABG to do the same.
- District and county councils shall co-ordinate their activities through the Oxfordshire Treasurers Group who would ensure information was provided for thematic partnerships (see activity and timescale above).