

Task & Finish update report to OSP

Task & Finish project name: Diverted (Alternative) Giving

Date: 1.6.2018

End Date: 1.9.2019

Report status: Mid-term

1. Task & Finish purpose and intended outcome

In common with other stakeholders, the Oxford Strategic Partnership is keen to see the development and launch of a diverted giving campaign that:

- Has the support of key partners, including organisations that assist homeless people and the wider public, and
- Is effective in persuading members of the public, who may otherwise be motivated to give money to people on the street, to donate instead to homelessness organisations and / or initiatives
- Raises funds that can help to prevent and relieve homelessness

Initially proposed by the Safer Communities sub-group this proposal now sits under Oxford Homeless Movement that is developing several work streams, one of which is alternative giving.

Oxford Homeless Movement provides potential to deliver consistent messages compared with a fragmented approach of many organisations working separately.

2. Achievements to date

Christmas Match Fund

The Christmas Match Fund campaign run by Oxfordshire Community Foundation and Oxford Poverty Action Trust (OxPAT) and supported by the Movement raised nearly £86,000 for homeless charities in Oxford.

Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI)

Oxford Homeless Movement is beginning to work with Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI), an independent think tank focusing upon how policy and practice is informed by evidence, about understanding effective approaches to diverted giving. Research points to less direct and more creative methods being more effective. Telling people how to use their money can be counter-productive and will not necessarily change people's behaviour. Avoiding language that stigmatises people sleeping rough is an important principle

Contactless Pilot (Greater Change / OxPAT)

A pilot project to prove the concept of contactless giving in Oxford is being run by Oxford Poverty Action Trust (OxPAT) and Greater Change. Currently 5 terminals are in place, mainly in smaller retail settings – they are looking for further potential hosts. It is testing the technology, assessing what support 'hosts' of the terminal require and understanding the most cost effective placing of the terminals. If the concept is proved then it can be scaled up.

This is not an Oxford Homeless Movement project but the learning is being shared.

Next Steps

Establishing the Movement and influencing behaviour of the general public via a diverted giving campaign to make a difference, needs consensus and coordination. In particular the Movement is currently:

- Working with the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI) to look at what works and how to evaluate success in diverted giving
- Developing a messaging framework to maintain a consistent line on key issues
- Working towards agreement to pool some communication efforts behind a campaign

3. Challenges and/or blocks to progress

- Developing consensus with a wide range of partners is vital for success. This takes time and still remains a challenge.
- Increasingly successful fundraising activity by individual organisations, prompted by cuts in public funding, means less of an incentive to work together
- A diverted giving programme has to work with (and not against) the fundraising ambitions and activity of key partners
- Homelessness charities nationally are softening their messages about giving to people living on the street and are cautious about signing up to overtly direct diverted giving campaigns

4. Requests for OSP support/advice/action/intervention (if required)

None at present