

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING SUB COMMITTEE

Thursday, 1 October 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee held via Microsoft Teams

Present

Members:

Marianne Fredericks (Chairman)	Paul Kennedy
Tijs Broeke (Deputy Chair)	Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Randall Anderson	Alderman Bronek Masojada
Mary Durcan	Benjamin Murphy
Helen Fentimen	William Pimlott
Alderman Alison Gowman	Jillian Reid
Alderman Vincent Keaveny	

Officers:

Kirsty Lowe	- Community and Children's Services Department
Will Norman	- Community and Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services Department
Simon Young	- Community and Children's Services Department
Aqib Hussain	- Chamberlain's Department
Louise Said	- Chamberlain's Department
Ellen Wentworth	- Chamberlain's Department
Antoinette Duhaney	- Town Clerk's Department
Kerry Nicholls	- Town Clerk's Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
PC Jason Foster	- City of London Police
Supt. Helen Isaac	- City of London Police

Also Present:

John Isserlis	- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
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1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Ruby Sayed.

2. **MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

There were no declarations.

3. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Members elected a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 29.

RESOLVED, that being the only Member willing to serve, Marianne Fredericks be appointed as Chairman of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

On taking the Chair, the Chairman thanked retiring Member, Jason Pritchard, for his work on the Sub Committee and welcomed new Members, Helen Fentimen, Alderman Alison Gowman and Jillian Reid (representing the Safer City Partnership).

4. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

Members elected a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 30.

RESOLVED, that being the only Member willing to serve, Tijs Broeke be appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **MINUTES**

The public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 29 June 2020 were approved.

With regard to Minute 9: The City of London Community Trigger Recommendations January 2020, the ASB Coordinator and Strategy Officer confirmed that the Mental Health team provided support and intervention at every level of the Community Trigger process.

RESOLVED, that the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 29 June 2020 be approved.

6. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Members received the Sub Committee's outstanding actions list and noted the following updates:

- The important contribution of the British Transport Police towards homelessness was highlighted and the Police Superintendent agreed to approach the representative of British Transport Police to attend future meetings of the Sub-Committee.
- In referring to recent discussions by the Sub-Committee on the work of Beam which used crowd funding to support homeless people into stable careers, a Member asked that this be flagged as an outstanding action to consider at a future meeting.
- Going forward, relevant press releases would be circulated to the Sub-Committee by the Media Officer via the Clerk to the Sub-Committee.
- A number of outstanding actions would be discussed during the course of the meeting. Others had been completed and would be removed from the Outstanding Actions list.

RESOLVED, that outstanding actions be noted.

7. MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE CITY OF LONDON

Members heard a presentation of the Senior Rough Sleeping Advisor of the Rough Sleeping Advisory Team, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

- The City of London Corporation was working closely with the Rough Sleeping Advisory Team to deliver the Year 3 workstreams of the Rough Sleeping Initiative Funding Programme with a proposal being drafted for Year 4. The City of London Corporation had established 19 beds at the YHA during the initial stages of the Government's "Everyone In" policy and had made a successful bid for £941k from the Next Steps Accommodation Programme to build on this offer by expanding the number of beds and providing support to service users.
- The Government had recently launched a £160M capital funding programme to provide 3,500 accommodation units for homeless people and rough sleepers by 31 March 2021, and a total of 6,000 new units over 3.5 years. Due to short timescales, as well as a limitations around the availability of City accommodation and the need to spend in-year, the City of London Corporation had been unable to bid for funding for the first tranche of this programme; however, there would be further opportunities to submit bids during the programme. It was anticipated that accommodation units would be sourced in a range of ways including private sale, modular accommodation and the conversion of existing hostel or nursing home accommodation. A further London-wide initiative, Target 1000, aimed to support 850 entrenched rough sleepers via a 'No Wrong Door' bespoke offer.
- Local authorities had a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to prevent people from becoming homeless, including those discharged from hospital or released from prison; however, there was a concern at a possible rise in homelessness and rough sleeping following the reintroduction of the eviction process which had been suspended at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. A Member suggested it would be helpful for the Court system to notify local authorities about upcoming eviction matters.
- European Union citizens without settled or pre-settled status would have no recourse to public funds after 31 December 2020 and local authorities would have to make their own decisions around funding any support. The Outreach Service continued to encourage European Union citizens who were homeless or rough sleepers to apply for settled status where possible, but some individuals were fearful of engagement with services and a high proportion of applicants were not successful. In discussion, Members flagged serious concerns over the impact of Brexit on European Union citizens without settled or pre-settled status and the Chairman suggested that it would be helpful to delay the recategorization of European Union citizens to no recourse to public funds during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Homelessness statistics were measured in two ways which comprised an annual return by all local authorities and a bi-monthly return which was undertaken by areas in receipt of funding from the Rough Sleeping Initiative Funding Programme. A significantly higher number of people than previously measured had requested accommodation via the Government's "Everyone in" policy due to homelessness and this included people whose accommodation arrangements had broken down as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A Member observed that a number of homeless people utilised public transport as a means of staying safe and were therefore not included in the annual street counts. The Senior Rough Sleeping Advisor confirmed that a new charter had been introduced for the rail network to ensure staff engaged in a more supportive way with those identified as homeless or rough sleeping.
- A Member underlined the need to consider how support services could best be delivered for people who were homeless or rough sleeping during Christmas 2020, particularly against a backdrop of social distancing requirements and local restrictions. The Senior Rough Sleeping Advisor confirmed that work was underway with Public Health England to produce guidance on the operation of homeless shelters and services. Providers should also work with local authorities and Public Health services to ensure the homelessness support offer was safe.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Rough Sleeping Advisor for his excellent presentation.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

8. **ROUGH SLEEPER DATA - END OF YEAR 2019/20 AND Q1 2020/21** The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of rough sleeper data for end of the year 2019/20 and Quarter 1 2020/21 and the following points were made:

- The total number of rough sleepers in the City of London was 172 as at Quarter 4 2019/20 and had fallen to 140 in Q1 2020/21. This was considerably lower than the same period in 2019/20 and was also lower than the City of London Corporation's benchmark local authorities. The most common support needs of rough sleepers were those relating to mental health and/or drug or alcohol misuse. Drug and alcohol support services could be accessed via Turning Point and the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Service was working with Public Health colleagues to develop a funding proposal to lower the threshold for accessing services.
- A Member requested that future statistical reports to the Sub-Committee include clarification on whether rough sleepers who were European Union citizens had settled or pre-settled status. The Chairman highlighted the need for a strategy to be in place to manage an increase in the numbers of rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds and

asked that a report be provided to a future meeting of Community and Children's Services Committee on this emerging issue and shared with members of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee.

- In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping confirmed that the use of 'Flow', 'Stock', and 'Returner' to categorise rough sleepers were official categories set out by the Greater London Authority to distinguish between rough sleepers who were known or unknown to services, but that different terminology would be used in future. Another Member was concerned at the proportion of rough sleepers listed as 'flow unidentified' and the Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping responded that this related to the people who had not yet been assessed by the Outreach Team.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

9. CREDIBLE OFFER POLICY

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the credible offer policy and the following point was made:

- The draft Credible Offer Policy had been designed to ensure that an equitable, effective and transparent approach was taken in the delivery of service offers to rough sleepers. In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping advised that service users would only be offered accommodation outside Greater London where they had a strong and safe connection to a particular location or where their individual needs could only be met outside London. Service users would not be placed outside Greater London unless they agreed, and all accommodation would be considered unsafe and/or unsuitable for placement until an assessment had positively determined its safety and suitability. A Member commended officers for an excellent policy and highlighted the importance of accommodating individuals in areas where they had the opportunity to develop social capital and engage with the community.

RESOLVED, that the Community and Children's Services Committee be recommended to approve the draft Credible Offer Policy.

10. COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services presenting an update on the COVID-19 Recovery Plan and the following points were made:

- The programme of regular street audits had continued on a bi-monthly basis throughout the COVID-19 pandemic with an average of 14 individuals identified as rough sleeping in the City of London on any given night. A significant number of rough sleepers had been supported

into emergency accommodation with the City of London Corporation or the Greater London Authority during the pandemic.

- 37 guests were being accommodated at Carter Lane hostel where work to identify and move individuals into longer term accommodation was ongoing.
- The City of London Police was taking a four 'E's approach to COVID-19 enforcement which comprised Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

11. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING - GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the growth programme and the following point was made:

- Longer term interventions being developed by the Commissioning and Rough Sleeping Services in conjunction with City Procurement comprised the Assessment Centre, High Support Hostel and Private Rented Sector procurement framework. Timescales to establish the Assessment Centre and High Support Hostel had been accelerated in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and work was underway to identify suitable locations.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

12. COMMUNITY PROTECTION NOTICES AND THE STREET POPULATION IN THE CITY OF LONDON

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services presenting a report on Community Protection Notices and the street population in the City of London and the following points were made:

- Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs) were used to deal with ongoing anti-social behaviour problems within a community by targeting the individuals, premises and/or businesses responsible. The City of London Police was the only agency within the Square Mile to have delegated authority to issue CPWs and CPNs specifically for anti-social behaviour. Between August 2019 and August 2020, 81 CPWs and CPNs had been issued by the City of London Police, of which 32 had been for begging. The number of CPWs and CPNs issued by Operation Luscombe was very low and any individual going through the Operation Luscombe process identified as being at risk of enforcement was brought to the attention of statutory and non-statutory partners for support and intervention services.
- Whilst CPWs and CPNs could be modified to an individual's specific behaviour and circumstances and include tailored positive prohibitions, this could be difficult to secure. A Member commented that there was

often a reluctance of people to share details with the Outreach Team whilst the Police or Parkguard were present and it was important to ensure that homeless people and rough sleepers felt confident in sharing information that would enable them to access support and intervention services. The Member requested that details on the proportion of those issued with CPWs and CPNs with suspected mental health issues be provided following the meeting. The Chairman took the Member's concern on board but said that this was not an issue she had witnessed when she had been out with the Police and Parkguard.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

13. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE UPDATE**

a) **COMMUNITY POLICING MODEL**

The Superintendent gave an update on the Community Policing Model and the following point was made:

- The Community Policing Model would have a focus on crime prevention and would address local issues via a series of ward hubs supported by sector tasking teams. A recruitment process was underway to ensure that the model was well-staffed.

b) **OPERATION LUSCOMBE**

The Police Constable gave an update on Operation Luscombe and the following points were made:

- The City of London Police worked closely with the British Transport Police in delivering Operation Luscombe which had been recognised as a highly successful programme in reducing begging and anti-social behaviour and had continued operating throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The Assessment Hub had been suspended for safety reasons during the COVID-19 pandemic but would be reintroduced from 21 October 2020.
- A Member queried whether there was any way of tracking rough sleepers who moved to new areas rather than into support services and the Police Constable explained that this was difficult to monitor as such individuals were unlikely to engage with local services. Another Member underlined the importance of data sharing at a national level to support the provision of consistent support.
- The Mental Health Street Triage service carried out mental health assessments of homeless and rough sleeping people where concerns were identified by the Police. A Member requested that a report on mental health and homelessness, including support and intervention strategies be provided to future meetings of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

- The Chairman underlined the importance of ensuring that homeless people and rough sleepers had access to face masks and antibacterial hand gel during the COVID-19 pandemic and noted that without a mask, individuals would not be able to access a range of services including local shops and medical care.

RESOLVED, that the updates be noted.

14. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There was one question raised

The Chairman noted the need to ensure the Sub-Committee had the necessary skills sets to deliver its planned work programme. Another Member suggested that consideration be given to inviting an external Member with relevant experience to join the Sub-Committee.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Two items of other business were considered.

The Chairman led the Sub-Committee in paying tribute to Isaura Abbas who was retiring after many years of managing The Lodge which was an exemplary provision for homeless people and had supported many people out of homelessness.

Thames Reach would take over from St Mungo's as the City of London Corporation's provider of outreach services for homeless people and rough sleepers from 1 November 2020. The Chairman led the Sub-Committee in thanking St Mungo's for its excellent service over many years.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that under Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item no	Para no
17	3
18	1, 2 and 3
19	3
20	3

17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2020 be approved.

18. CITY OF LONDON POLICE NON-PUBLIC UPDATE

a) **BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES**

The Police Constable gave an update on best practice approaches.

19. QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE WHILE THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There were three questions raised.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

One matter was raised while the public were excluded.

The meeting closed at 1.50 pm

Chairman

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