

Committee	Date
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee	14/12/2018
Subject: Assessment Hub Activity Update	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter – Director, Department of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Will Norman – Service Manager, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

Summary

This report summarises our Rough Sleeper Assessment Hub activity co-funded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government through its Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Fund. The report covers the period between September and November 2018.

Recommendation

- Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London commenced operating a Pop-up Hub for rough sleepers in 2012. The initial funding from the Homelessness Transition Fund provided for 10 hubs across two years. In 2014, the tempo settled to quarterly as funding moved to the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) Fund. Activity temporarily ceased when this funding came to an end, but recommenced in 2017 with the introduction of new monies into the ‘Pathway Model’. Since August 2018 the Pop-up Hub (now referred to as the City of London Assessment Hub) has been co-funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) RSI Fund which has increased scope and tempo. Hubs are now monthly and currently delivered from St Botolph without Aldgate (St Botolph’s Aldgate). Each Hub lasts for 6 nights.

Current Activity

2. The Assessment Hub is a collaboration between the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Team, St Mungo’s, Providence Row charity, Westminster Drug Project (WDP) and the Diocese of London.
3. The overarching principles of the Assessment Hub are:

- a commitment to end rough sleeping in the Square Mile
- every rough sleeper in the City of London will have an offer of a 'route off the street'
- achieving our aims through partnership and collaboration.

4. The core objectives of the Assessment Hub are:

- commitment to the 'in for good' principle for attendees
- rapid assessment and clear messaging for new rough sleepers
- enhanced case work for 'living on the streets' clients
- quarter-on-quarter reduction in rough sleeping numbers.

5. A graphic representation of the clients' journey through the Assessment Hub can be found in Appendix 1 to this report. An overview of the model is as follows:

- **Location** – principally St Botolph's Aldgate, although the Hub is designed to be deliverable from different locations. The current setting affords good access to the Providence Row Dellow Centre and is in close proximity to our most active areas for rough sleeping. Consideration is given to access and the available facilities.
- **Set-up** – the Hubs use folding camp beds in a shared space. This provides a comfortable and dignified arrangement that meets the needs of most individuals. Female rough sleepers, or those assessed to be vulnerable to others, can be accommodated separately on a case-by-case basis. Two night staff with experience in Hub delivery work in the space and provide advice, support and assessment for all attendees.
- **Outreach** – in the week leading up to the Hub, the team prepare a list of our most vulnerable clients. This is based on new rough sleepers who have arrived since the last Hub took place, as well as rough sleepers from the 'living on the streets' cohort. Extra shifts are provided, with the main objective of getting rough sleepers into the Hub. This continues from Sunday night through to the following Thursday.
- **Partnership** – an RSI-funded case worker is permanently embedded with Providence Row at the Dellow Centre. This role liaises with the designated RSI case worker in the outreach team to ensure that support planning is delivered consistently throughout the month. During a Hub week, the Providence Row worker co-ordinates access to the wider service offer available at the Dellow Centre – hot breakfast and lunch, specialist benefits advice, reconnection planning and assistance. WDP is also available during the day at the Dellow Centre.
- **Reporting** – a monitoring tool is in place that exceeds the requirements set out by the RSI Fund. This allows us to provide accurate data within one week of a Hub, as well as building a clearer picture about how the Hub is used and by whom. Data is submitted on a monthly basis directly to DELTA, the Central Government monitoring software platform.

Data and Learning

6. The following tables summarise interventions and learning from the August, September and October Assessment Hubs.

Table 1 – Interventions and support actions

GPs	7
Scripting	2
Benefits advice*	13
ID ordered	7
Mental health referral	2
	Total 31

* Early indications are that the link with the Department for Work and Pensions advisor at the Dellow Centre has been a useful asset.

Table 2 – Support needs

Mental health	21
Physical health	16
Drug use	21
Alcohol use	16
Complex needs*	15
No recourse to public funds	7
No support needs	5

* Some clients will have more than one presenting need. This data should be interpreted as 15 of the total number of Hub attendees have two or more assessed needs, plus other complicating factors that categorise them as complex needs cases.

Table 3 – Routes off the street

Reconnection	6
Other arrangements	1
Temporary accommodation	4
Hostel	3
No second night out	2
Shared room pending night shelter	2
Reconnection staging post	1
Institutional stay/section 2	1
	Total 20

The 20 outcomes to date refer to the initial route off the street for 20 individuals and correspond with the data provided to MHCLG.

Future Activity

7. Hub dates have been confirmed through to July 2019, with the venue confirmed as St Botolph's Aldgate until April 2019.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. We continue to collect data as well as stakeholder and service user feedback with a view to demonstrating how different interventions meet the needs of various rough sleeping cohorts. Experience derived from the Hubs will help us build an evidence picture to explore brief intervention night services and enhanced case work models. We will investigate the impact of partnership with day centres, and the impact that these approaches have with our various cohorts. We can expect this knowledge to influence future planning and commissioning decisions.

Conclusion

9. The Assessment Hub continues to be a valuable and effective tool in supporting rough sleepers and reducing rough sleeping numbers. Early indications are that the increase in tempo from quarterly to monthly has not brought any negative implications for wider service delivery or client take-up.
10. Partnership and collaboration are key elements of the service. The anonymised case study in Appendix 2 demonstrates the strength and benefits of this approach.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Assessment Hub Flow of Support
- Appendix 2 – Case Study – to be provided to Members separately

Will Norman

Service Manager, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
Department of Community and Children's Services

T: 020 7332 1994

E: will.norman@cityoflondon.gov.uk