

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING SUB COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 1 May 2019

Minutes of the meeting held at the Guildhall EC2 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Marianne Fredericks (Chairman)	Benjamin Murphy
Tijs Broeke (Deputy Chairman)	William Pimlott
Randall Anderson	Henrika Priest
Mary Durcan	Mark Wheatley
Rev Paul Kennedy	
David Mackintosh	

Officers:

Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services
Simon Cribbens	- Community and Children's Services
Will Norman	- Community and Children's Services
Simon Young	- Community and Children's Services
Sofia Sadiq	- Community and Children's Services
Tinu Williamson-Taylor	- Community and Children's Services
Russell Pengelly	- City of London Police
Jess Wynne	- City of London Police
Philip Saunders	- Remembrancers

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Ian Luder and Dhruv Patel.

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 18th February 2019 be approved.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Members received the Sub Committee's outstanding actions list and noted those items which had either been, or would be, discharged on this and future agendas. Members also noted the following updates:

The visits to Dellow, the Lodge and Anchor House had been very insightful and the Chairman asked if they could be repeated, once the new Sub Committee had been elected at the Community and Children's Services Committee on 8th May 2019.

Members had welcomed the briefings to the Ward Motes in March and their resolutions would be presented to Court and Grand Committees for action, in the usual manner.

The Chairman was pleased to report the good response to the Members Breakfast on 18th June at 8.30 am. The Police would also be attending to provide an update on Operation Luscombe.

5. A PRESENTATION FROM PARKGUARD LTD

Members received a presentation from Parkguard Ltd, who provide a community safety patrol service for local authorities and social landlords. Members noted the company's ethos to educate; with enforcement as a last resort, and they had no private sector clients.

The officer explained that, since the Neighbourhoods and Housing Patrol Service had started in the City of London Corporation in 2015, there had been one dedicated officer (with back-up during leave etc.) who had built an excellent relationship with residents, City Corporation staff and the City of London Police. In 2018, this work had extended to accompanying St Mungo's homelessness and rough sleeping outreach workers. The Chairman of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee had also attended Parkguard patrols.

The Outreach Workers had welcomed Parkguard's support in high risk areas, as had the Police in data gathering. The Parkguard officer also attended multi-agency meetings. The van contained a device for inputting reports at the end of shifts, which also linked to Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) data. Members noted that Parkguard officers were vetted and trained by the Police and plans were underway to give them full Community Safety Accreditation Scheme accreditation. Members noted that this accreditation could also be given to similar organisations.

During questions, Members noted the following:

- Police reports would be available by the end of this week, mapping intelligence gathered by Parkguard. Members asked if they could see this data and whether it could be appended in a non-public appendix to future Performance Reports?
- Parkguard's findings had been very similar to those of Operation Luscombe (at agenda item 9 on this agenda); i.e. - in most cases, beggars were not rough sleepers.
- Parkguard had been working with Transport for London in respect of Old Street Station and Members asked if this could be rolled out to Cannon Street?
- The Housing Estates had benefitted from the joint work with St Mungo's outreach workers and the number of rough sleepers in blocks had declined considerably. Following the last extended Severe Weather

Emergency Plan (SWEP), many genuine cases had been given placements.

- The Parkguard Officer was trained in Safeguarding. Intelligence gained on vulnerable clients could be captured in their reports and escalated to the City Police and/or Housing officers in urgent cases.

The Chairman and Members thanked Parkguard for this insightful presentation and their excellent work.

6. **A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE VAGRANCY ACT**

Members received an update on measures related to begging and rough sleeping. The Assistant Directors (Community and Children's Services) had met with the Senior Civil Servant leading on the legislation change and spoken to the Minister for Homelessness. The Directors advised that the Government were keen to consult and engage but, at this time, could not commit to a timescale.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- Some Members expressed strong views about the need for legal change and modernisation in relation to rough sleeping. Members noted how Operation Luscombe had been successful in taking a longer term view and other forces had expressed an interest in this initiative. However, Police Officers present felt that some form of enforcement powers were necessary in order to protect individuals and the public.
- The City Corporation would benefit from working in partnership with London Councils, who have a strong evidence base. Members noted a debate in the Commons last week and looked forward to future opportunities for the City Corporation to participate in the debate.
- Members noted that the Crisis Charity had considerable evidence and would launch their repeal campaign after the Summer 2019 recess.
- The City Corporation would need to consider its position on begging and rough sleeping prior to gathering documentation about any difficulties with the current arrangements, including on the Vagrancy Act and other Acts. Members accepted that this work could be very resource intensive and suggested that the City Corporation should work in partnership with other agencies, who have been collating evidence, and particularly London Councils. Officers were asked to review and report back on the positioning of boroughs and other parties in London.
- Members accepted that, whilst this was an important piece of work, it should not take precedence over the options appraisal work set out in the following item on the agenda.

7. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL UPDATE REPORT**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which provided an update on the options appraisal work package advertised commercially for the consideration of specialist consultants.

The Chairman asked if officers could consider moving the date of the meeting scheduled for October, to early September, in order to consider the final version of this report at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

8. **ROUGH SLEEPING WINTER CAMPAIGN/ALTERNATIVE GIVING AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGN**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which provided an update on the Winter Awareness Campaign and plans for the Alternative Giving Campaign. During the discussion on this item the following points were noted:

Cheapside had been chosen for the 'tap' pilot, given the number of issues in this area. The data from Parkguards, as discussed earlier on this agenda, would help to inform the location of future devices.

This pilot would not be an extension of the GLA's and unique to the City Corporation. The message from the promotion would be to encourage rough sleepers to move off the street.

Officers were engaging with one large Supermarket and Members suggested that this extend to others, once the pilot had concluded.

A PR campaign was planned for the installation and rollout and this would include City Matters; City AM and the Cheapside Business Alliance. Members suggested using local press as much as possible.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **OPERATION LUSCOMBE**

Members received a report of the Chief Inspector, Communities and Partnerships, City of London Police, in respect of Operation Luscombe, which had been developed to tackle begging. Member noted that, in the City of London Corporation, 90% of beggars were not rough sleepers. During the discussion and questions the following points were noted:

- The first Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) for 3 years had been issued for begging. Although rehabilitation could not be enforced, the individual had engaged with services as a result. Officers asked to be kept advised of any future CBOs. The Police stressed that, whilst CBOs were a resort, sometimes enforcement was the only option available to safeguard an individual and members of the public.

- The hub was most effective when it opened every two weeks and officers were looking at permanent locations.
- There was a new British Transport Police (BTP) Inspector in post at Liverpool Street and collaborative work was continuing. The Chairman asked if the Inspector could be invited to the next meeting.
- The National Standard of Incident Report, as set by the Home Office, placed rough sleeping and begging in the same category.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. **ROUGH SLEEPING INITIATIVE WORKSTREAMS UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of outcomes related to Central Government funded increases in rough sleeping provision within the City of London.

Members asked if future reports could provide more detail in respect of outcomes; i.e. how many rough sleeping clients had moved off the street and into accommodation.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. **DRAFT SAFER CITY PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2019-22**

Members received a report of the Town Clerk which provided a context for the draft Safer City Partnership Strategy for 2019-22, currently under development by the Safer City Partnership (SCP). Members noted that, at the time of submission, a number of requested changes and additions were being incorporated into the plan. It was intended that the final version would be approved by the Safer City Partnership on 20 May 2019 and Members' comments and views were invited.

The officer advised that many of the discussions from today's meeting would be captured in the workstreams below the Strategy and an additional resource was in place to co-ordinate the work. The officer advised that the reference to begging and rough sleeping, in the context of anti-social behaviour, would be tweaked to ensure it was factual and not perception-based. Members noted that the Licensing Team were contributing to the Strategy in terms of the night-time economy and the new Alcohol Strategy. Finally, Members were assured that, in line with other City of London Corporation Policies and Strategies, the document would be reviewed regularly.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. **Q4 PERFORMANCE REPORT - HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING**
Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the level and nature of homelessness and rough sleeping activity within the City of London during the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2018/19.

Members noted that, whilst the report reflected a turbulent period, the commissioned services were working well. The Assistant Director explained that the number of rough sleepers had seen its largest increase in periods 2 and 3, and had slightly reduced in quarter 4, but this was twice the rate at the same time last year. Members noted that the data included those sleeping in tents and, as CHAIN data covered the whole of London, it would include those not seen again in London. Furthermore, the unwillingness of some clients to identify themselves made them very difficult to track. Members were pleased to note success at Anchor House with some clients without recourse to public funds.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted.

13. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their support and hard work in progressing the objectives of the Sub Committee, since it was established in September 2018.

15. **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 of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 (Schedule 12 A) of the Local Government Act.

Item no
16-18

Paragraph no
1,2 & 3

16. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, That the public minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2019 be approved.

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

There were no questions

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

There were no items.

The meeting closed at 1.10 pm

Chairman

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