

## HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING SUB COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 26 April 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 1.45 pm

### Present

#### Members:

Deputy Marianne Fredericks (Chairman)	Mary Durcan
Henrika Priest (Deputy Chairman)	Helen Fentimen
Deputy John Absalom	Eamonn Mullally
James Bromiley-Davis	Ruby Sayed
Anne Corbett	

#### Officers:

Katie Davies	- Town Clerk's Department
John Jeffery	- City of London Police
John Barker	- Community & Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community & Children's Services Department
Fleur Holley-Moore	- Community & Children's Services Department
Will Norman	- Community & Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community & Children's Services Department
Ellie Ward	- Community & Children's Services Department
Rowan Wyllie	- Community & Children's Services Department

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Alderman Broniek Masojada and Mark Wheatley.

The Chair provided an update on the new staff that had joined the Community and Children's Services Department to assist with homelessness and rough sleeping.

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

There were no declarations.

#### 3. MINUTES

**RESOLVED** – That the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 20 February 2023 be approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

- Apologies for absence were received from James Bromiley-Davis

#### 4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Members received a report of the Town Clerk setting out the Sub Committee's outstanding actions list.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

5. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE UPDATE**

Members received an update of the City of London Police, and the following points were made:

- Operation Luscombe was in place to deal with the issue of begging on the streets. From the period of 21 December 2022, 28 notices were issued inviting individuals to attend the hub. The hub included City of London Police, the Rough Sleeping Team, charities, and drug and alcohol referral services. The notices were issued by a colour scheme which allowed a log to be kept of individuals on the system. The colour scheme ranged from Green - an invitation to the hub, to Red - stopping them from entering The City or a specified area within the City for a three-month period. A survey was being developed to give to individuals using the hub to provide better and more engaging services.
- An update on Streetlink, as well as a partnership with Liverpool Street Station to advertise Street Link on their digital advertising board, would be given at the next meeting.

In response to a question from the Chair, Members were informed that begging trends remained level with key hotspots remaining under patrol.

A query was raised about other services offered by the Luscombe hub and uptake levels. It was noted that the hub met every two weeks, and an update and data will be provided by the next meeting.

Another query was raised concerning the motivation from begging. An Officer advised that anecdotally, the money individuals raised from begging was usually to purchase drugs and alcohol. Although some begged for basic sustenance, this was in a minority of cases. The Service provided a route off the street into accommodation where assessments of individual's needs could take place and they could be assisted. A Member asked whether data could be gathered and published, and an Officer advised they would look into this.

The Chair commented that as people generally carried less cash than previously, more people were now giving beggars food and drinks rather than money.

The Chair encouraged Members to attend the hub and thanked the vicar of the church for making the space available.

**RESOLVED** - that the update be noted.

6. **GROUNDSWELL - COPRODUCTION PHASE ONE REPORT FINDINGS**

The Sub Committee received a presentation from Groundswell on the City Coproduction Project. This project focuses on power sharing and increasing client involvement.

The importance of coproduction being woven throughout all work was discussed so that it informed work.

The Chair thanked Groundswell for their presentation as well as all their work, noting that there has been a noticeable reduction of rough sleepers thanks to their efforts and there were now multiple routes to help people off the streets.

**RESOLVED** – That the presentation be noted.

7. **STREETLINK**

The Sub Committee received a presentation from Greater London Authority on Streetlink.

The Sub Committee was informed that Streetlink was a service people could use to alert their local authority or its outreach team to someone they had seen sleeping rough with the purpose of connecting them to support to hopefully help them off the streets.

Members heard that the service was 10 years old and, in this time, there had been approximately 500,000 alerts, with over 300,000 of these in London. The proportion of those self-referring had increased over this time and now accounted for approximately one quarter of referrals in London. The majority of self-referrals were via the phone line, whereas the public mainly used digital services and were encouraged to do so.

The Sub Committee was informed that Streetlink London was a separate service set up in 2020 as a result of more people self-referring to Streetlink. It worked with approximately 200 people per quarter and aimed to directly prevent or resolve their rough sleeping, which it did in about two-thirds of cases.

Members were advised that the Government was procuring a new contract for the national Streetlink service under a revised service model, and this was due to commence in October 2023. It would be a digital service only. The GLA had been consulting on whether a service could be established to replace any functionality in London.

Members raised their concerns over the removal of the option of referring by phone which was usually the only option for rough sleepers and sometimes for office night security workers who made referrals after seeing people rough sleeping on CCTV as well as difficulties in using the app and frustrations in users not receiving updates on their referrals. A Member also questioned why it was not possible to refer people seen rough sleeping during the day and was advised that it was to ensure that people were rough sleeping and not just begging during the day. It was also noted that Streetlink was often the first introduction to support services for rough sleepers so it was important it worked well and rough sleepers felt they were assisted.

In response to a question, Members were informed that a new interface was expected to be launched in September/October with improvements including better usability.

Members requested a written response to their feedback and requested that a follow-up session with the new provider be arranged.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the presentation be noted.
- 2) That a follow-up session be arranged with the new provider.
- 3) Following further questions, additional data was provided to

Members.

8. **ANNUAL SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PROTOCOL (SWEP) REPORT 2022/2023**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Director of Community and Children's Services presenting the 2022/2023 Annual Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) Report.

In response to a question, Members were informed that couples, either romantic or friends, could enter accommodations together. Both double and single rooms were available.

In response to a query, Members were assured that no evictions took place during the activation period. Evictions and abandonment were the result of those that found it difficult to follow the rules of accommodation and the ability to engage. The team continued to be in touch with these individuals and offer alternate accommodation. Members were advised that those who abandoned, all spent at least one night in the service when it was exceptionally cold. Data was collected and findings would be used when reviewing the SWEP policy for this financial year.

The chair noted how helpful SWEP is in longer periods of bad weather and thanked the staff working the extended SWEPs.

**RESOLVED –** That the report be noted.

9. **ROUGH SLEEPING Q3 2022/2023 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Interim Director of Community and Children's Services presenting the Quarter 3 Rough Sleeping Performance Report for 2022/2023.

The Chair enquired if the Government would continue to give further support for those facing eviction, as it had done during lockdown. Members were informed an analysis of this could be found in the Kersley Report.

**RESOLVED –** That the report be noted.

10. **HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2023-27**

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Community and Children's Services on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 to 27.

It was discussed that the strategy should emphasize the importance of the individual and that coproduction under weaved all works.

In response to questions from a Member about the contents of the Strategy, Members were informed that an Action Plan was being produced and would address these concerns. The Action Plan would be presented to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee as it was still being developed in consultation with partners and services users. The Strategy focused on how needs and priorities and the Action Plan would provide more detail on this.

Members requested to look at the Strategy in greater detail to gain a deeper understanding and discuss where action related to outcome and how that was measured.

An Officer stated that the comments of the Sub-Committee could be reflected when the Strategy was considered by the grand Committee and suggested that the approval of the strategy would be delayed as it would not impact the work on this. The Strategy could be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee along with the Action Plan when completed.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1) That Members would have an informal meeting with Officers to further discuss the strategy
- 2) That the Strategy and Action Plan be submitted together to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

**11. JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

The Sub Committee received a verbal report of the Interim Director of Community and Children's Services presenting the joint health and wellbeing strategy. It was noted that this is in consultation until 12 May 2023 with an Action Plan to follow, focusing on health inequalities, access to employment, and contacting both individuals and outside organisation.

**RESOLVED –** That this report be noted.

**12. 'DANIEL' SAFEGUARDING ADULTS REVIEW - ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a verbal report of the Interim Director of Community and Children's Services updating the Safeguarding Adults Review Action Plan. It was noted of the 13 recommendations, 4 were fully implemented and 3 had not progressed. Those that had not progressed were awaiting confirmation of their progression. There would be learning events later in the year to share findings with practitioners and partners and quality assurance audits would be undertaken to check that recommendations had been implemented in the case work.

Members were advised that later in the year there would be a written update on the action plan and recommendations.

In response to a query, Members were informed that in case of a proposed reduction of funding, the report could be highlighted as one of the reasons funding needed to be kept in place.

It was noted that these recommendations had already been implemented by the City of London Police.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

**13. ASSESSMENT CENTRE UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a verbal update of the Interim Director of Community and Children’s Services on the assessment centre, including the following points:

- Capital works have begun on site at Snow Hill with a forecasted completion of November. Noise concerns had been raised from an adjoining tenant. The diocese had funded some secondary glazing to help with this and the Corporation had agreed to fund some additional acoustic boarding protection. A positive meeting had been held between the contractor and the concerned tenant to resolve issues.
- There has been progression of the procurement contract, with environment safety a high priority. The selection process should be completed in Summer 2023.

**RESOLVED** – That this update be noted.

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

Questions were raised in respect of the following:

- In response to a query on access to dental health, Members were informed that a work stream to include dental health was underway. In the meantime, a weekly health van was available to individuals, with plans to include other areas of health.
- The Chair raised concerns of individuals riding trains and night buses. The Members were informed that Officers reached out to GLA and would try to capture this data.

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

The Chair noted that this was the last meeting before the end of the civic year and thanked the Members, Officers, and partners for their work, applauding the opening of the assessment centre.

**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**  
17

**Para no**  
3

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**  
**RESOLVED**, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2023 be approved.
18. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE NON-PUBLIC UPDATE**  
There was no Non-Public City of London Police update.
19. **QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE WHILE THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**  
There were no non-public questions.
20. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**  
There was no other business.

**The meeting closed at 3.40 pm**

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Chairman

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