

Committee:	Dated:
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee	21/04/2021
Subject: COVID-19 Recovery Plan Progress Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3,4,10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Andrew Carter – Director, Department of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Will Norman – Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on our recovery measures as we ease out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report covers the Carter Lane and Travelodge London City sites as well as the accompanying support contracts.

Our work is cross-referenced with the City of London Rough Sleeping COVID-19 Recovery Plan, presented to Members in June 2020. The summary provided in paragraph 14 below addresses the action plan principles as set out in that document. Members would benefit from reading this report alongside the Growth Programme Update Report, also presented to Members on 21 April 2021.

Since March 2020 we have assisted 387 individuals into accommodation and 35 have successfully moved on to settled accommodation.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. 16 March 2021 marks a year since we started recording data and reporting on our COVID-19 work as a discrete project.
2. In April 2020 we closed the Winter Assessment Centre at St Katherine Cree Church on public health grounds and launched the Carter Lane project.
3. In May 2020 the Government announced it's 'Everyone In' call to action to local authorities and appointed Dame Louise Casey to drive the effort to ensure that, for the duration of the pandemic, every rough sleeper had an alternative to homelessness and access to safe and suitable accommodation where health needs could be monitored and met, where necessary.
4. Throughout April and May 2020, the Greater London Authority (GLA) set up an extensive network of hotels (known as CHORUS) across greater London – some for general needs, others set aside to support self-isolation requirements.
5. In June 2020 Members were presented with a Recovery Plan which set out the overarching principles of our COVID-19 response and recovery work. A summary of our progress against these principles, as well as a focus on the main workstreams, can be found from paragraph 14.

Current Position

6. Since March 2020, there are a total of 387 accommodation outcomes listed on the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) in relation to individuals rough sleeping in City of London. Of these, 282 used accommodation commissioned or procured by the City of London, including COVID-19 accommodation, and 75 accessed the GLA CHORUS programme.
7. Through much of the pandemic, at any one time we sustained around 84 people across Carter Lane, Travelodge London City and ad-hoc hotel bookings, mostly at Travelodge London Central Kings Cross. We are currently supporting 78 people in total, with 65 people across Carter Lane and Travelodge London City.
8. Of these 78, 29 either have no recourse to public funds or their eligibility is in doubt and requires confirmation. This group originate from 16 countries, four of which fall outside the EU.
9. We can redefine the wider group into three cohorts:
 - No assessed barriers to move-on – 18
 - Mid-level risk to successful move on – 39
 - High-level risk to successful move-on – 21

10. To date 44 Credible Service Offers have been issued and none have yet been formally rejected.
11. A total of 35 individuals have so far moved on from Carter Lane and Travelodge London City to settled accommodation.

COVID-19 Recovery Plan

12. In May 2020, the City of London developed a COVID-19 Recovery Plan designed to complement a larger effort being steered by the Rough Sleeping Strategic Group – London Councils, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), GLA, etc. – to ensure the safe recovery of rough sleeping population following the COVID-19 health crisis.
13. The plan also includes actions specific to developing new interventions that will increase the long-term capacity of the service, as endorsed by Members in March 2020. The scope of this recovery plan extends to the cohort of rough sleepers that the City of London has a responsibility for, which is determined by those individuals with a local connection and those who were present in the City of London prior to 1 March 2020.
14. Our approach was aligned with that of the GLA and other local authorities, and regional bodies reporting their progress into central Government. To this end we adopted the same overarching principles (1 to 7 below) with the addition of two City-specific principles (8 and 9). A summary of our progress against these principles is as follows:

- **Principle 1:** To seek to ensure that no one who has been placed in emergency accommodation in response to the COVID-19 public health crisis is asked to leave that emergency accommodation without an ongoing offer of support to end their rough sleeping.

This has been achieved through the development of a 'Credible Offer Policy'.

- **Principle 2:** To ensure there is the capacity and capability to deliver and implement 'In for Good' offers of support.

Capacity at Carter Lane has been increased from 20 to 45 rooms and the lease duration has been extended according to the pandemic situation. Additional capacity has been secured through the use of ad-hoc hotel room bookings and a 30-room group contract with Travelodge London City.

- **Principle 3:** To ensure continued protection from COVID-19 for those who need it.

Carter Lane operates to a design endorsed by City and Hackney Public Health. This includes a COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedure. Rooms at Travelodge London City are self-contained and en-suite. Catering to both locations is provided by a contracted service. A vaccination clinic has been

provided at Carter Lane. To date we are aware of a single small outbreak involving two Carter Lane guests, which was managed effectively.

- **Principle 4:** The City of London will work with London boroughs so that no boroughs, including the City of London, are disproportionately impacted as a result of hosting rough sleepers from outside their boroughs during the emergency.

The City of London has not hosted any COVID-19 accommodation services other than those commissioned by us.

- **Principle 5:** The City of London supports the London-wide approach which will complement the efforts of individual boroughs and providers, and vice versa.

A small number of cases referred into CHORUS have been referred back to us. In each case this has been consistent with the principles set out by the GLA. Each case has been referred to City of London Adult Social Care.

- **Principle 6:** To ensure an integrated housing approach with health and care to secure access to services and continuity of care.

The health implications for this client group have not been as severe as we might have expected. We remain committed to ensuring that anyone accommodated in COVID-19 contingency accommodation has access to a Care Act assessment, should that be required. GP registrations have been prioritised and all guests have been notified of vaccination clinics.

- **Principle 7:** Ensure that the roll out is gradual, to avoid a 'cliff edge' and overload of services as lockdown is lifted.

We have used our resources flexibly and adapted our overall capacity according to the presenting need. Our latest iteration of the recovery plan, and specifically our plans for Carter Lane in the context of our Growth Programme can be found from paragraph 15.

- **Principle 8 (specific to City of London):** Some rough sleepers may choose to refuse their offer of support. The City of London will work hard to prevent this but, ultimately, the public health emergency does not bestow upon the City of London the power, or the responsibility, to keep accommodating rough sleepers in emergency accommodation once an offer of support more suitable to the rough sleeper's needs and circumstances has been made and refused.

This principle is supported through our development and roll out of a fair and equitable Credible Offer Policy.

- **Principle 9 (specific to City of London):** Enable the transition from recovery plans to long-term capacity development.

Oversight spanning our COVID-19 recovery work and substantive Growth Programme has been provided through a project group which meets weekly.

The interdependence between the three core accommodation elements covered by the combined programmes – Carter Lane, City Assessment Centre, High Support Hostel – has been tracked and monitored throughout.

Carter Lane and Travelodge London City

15. Carter Lane continues to operate as our frontline COVID-19 facility. We have entered into a new lease with the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) for the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 with break clauses in July, September and December 2021. Each clause can be activated with 12 weeks' notice.
16. We currently plan to occupy Carter Lane until 31 December 2021. Depending on the progress of preparatory work, we expect the City Assessment Centre to be available from January 2022. Subject to a successful procurement process, the new High Support Hostel is scheduled to launch in November 2021. These three services effectively blend the COVID-19 Recovery Plan with the Growth Programme. A combination of all three will ensure we avoid the 'cliff edge' where COVID-19 recovery interventions are withdrawn while new Growth Programme elements are not ready to take their place.
17. By 1 July 2021 we expect the Carter Lane resident population (made up of guests referred in as part of the 'Everyone In' approach) to have reduced to 35. This allows the balance of eight to 10 beds to be used by the Outreach team as assessment beds – effectively our 'off the street' offer to new rough sleepers. This approach allows us to meet the objectives of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan and Growth Programme simultaneously.
18. We are gradually reducing our reliance on hotel usage. We have entered into a new contract with Travelodge London City for 20 rooms; this is a reduction from 30. The 20-room contract expires on 17 May 2021, after which we will no longer block book with Travelodge.
19. COVID-19 vaccinations are available to Carter Lane residents, Travelodge residents and rough sleepers through dedicated clinics. The first clinic was delivered by the Bart's Hospital/Excel vaccination team through City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group. The clinic took place at Carter Lane on 18 February 2021, and 12 clients across these cohorts received a vaccination. Further clinics are likely to be delivered by East London Foundation Trust during April.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Financial implications

20. Utilising Carter Lane as both a COVID-19 'Everyone In' site and an assessment setting for the Outreach team means that the new Assessment Centre is not required until the beginning of 2022. This creates a revenue saving.
21. The City of London MHCLG Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) allocation for Quarter 1 2021/22 has been confirmed as £347,000. This includes a £200,000

uplift from the same period in 2020/21, which must be spent sustaining emergency accommodation to assist COVID-19 recovery efforts.

22. The cost of operating Carter Lane to December 2021 can therefore be found within the local risk budget for 2021/22.

Procurement implications

23. A procurement exercise was undertaken which resulted in the award of a contract to CH&CO to continue delivery of hot meals to both Carter Lane and Travelodge London City. The contract commenced 1 April 2021 and has the scope to run for the same duration as the lease at Carter Lane.

24. The support contract fulfilled by Providence Row Housing Association has been varied and extended in line with procurement regulations. To avoid breaching the maximum contract value we can award, the extended contract will run to 30 September 2021. Prior to that time, a public tender process will be required in order to fulfil the remaining weeks to December 2021.

25. The Thames Reach outreach contract has been varied to allow the team to deliver the peripatetic support service to Travelodge hotel guests. This service will be delivered for six months from 1 April 2021.

Conclusion

26. We remain on track to deliver outcomes against the principles within the City of London COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

27. We continue to have enough capacity to assist new rough sleepers and the cohort accommodated under 'Everyone In'.

28. Successful resettlement plans are being achieved and Credible Service Offers are being issued.

29. Our COVID-19 Recovery Plan and Growth Programme are now interdependent. This has enabled us to find savings and efficiencies when deploying the three main elements – Carter Lane, City Assessment Centre and High Support Hostel.

30. We intend to occupy Carter Lane to December 2021. From July 2021 it will fulfil a dual function as a COVID-19 site and an assessment service.

Appendices

- None

Background Papers

- City of London Rough Sleeping and COVID-19 Recovery Plan – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Subcommittee, June 2020
- Growth Programme Update Report – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Subcommittee, 21 April 2021

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