

Committee:	Dated:
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-committee	21/04/2021
Subject: Growth Programme Update 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 updates Members on the various workstreams within the planned Growth Programme for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Services. The report recaps the different elements and provides an update on the work underway or completed for each one. Members would benefit from reading this report alongside the COVID-19 Recovery Plan Progress Report, also presented to Members on 21 April 2021.

The original growth programme was designed and developed prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. Subsequent COVID-19 response and recovery work has therefore impacted on the growth programme workstreams, to a greater or lesser extent.

The integration of the Growth Programme and COVID-19 Recovery Plan have ensured a comprehensive and resilient response to the challenge created by the pandemic as well as continued new and emerging need presented by rough sleeping.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Current Position

1. Paragraphs 2 to 20 set out each of the original workstreams within the Growth Proposal. Each is followed by a brief summary of progress.
2. **24-hour Assessment Hub (interim)** – a short-term setting from which a 24-hour, 7-day-per-week assessment facility can operate. An early assumption was that finding a longer-term home, including undertaking the necessary refurbishment work, would require an interim solution. This interim hub would effectively accelerate the programme and allow for the delivery of a ‘test-bed’ approach where assessment models and partnerships could be explored in advance of a longer-term model being deployed. Support would be provided via a standalone contract. The service would be within the Square Mile and was expected to commence in 2020/21.
3. **Progress:** During winter 2020/21 we operated our first standalone Winter Assessment Hub at St Katherine Cree Church. It was anticipated that important learning from this successful service would be used later in the year when we expected to begin an interim assessment service, similar to that set out in paragraph 2. The COVID-19 pandemic struck in March 2020 hastening the closure of the St Katherine Cree service for health reasons. By late April we launched the dedicated COVID-19 contingency accommodation at Carter Lane which has subsequently fulfilled our assessment requirements for new and existing rough sleepers throughout 2020/21.
4. A significant amount of learning has been captured through delivering the Carter Lane service – both anecdotally and more formally through the ‘City Voices’ service user consultation.
5. **24-hour Assessment Centre (long-term)** – this service would supersede the interim assessment centre, providing a settled home for the assessment centre, fully refurbished to a specification suitable for a long-term commitment. The service is expected to accommodate 12 to 15 clients for a period of up to 12 weeks. As in paragraph 2 above, a support contract would be delivered via a standalone contract. The service should be within the Square Mile and is expected to commence in 2022/23.
6. **Progress:** The uncertain nature of the pandemic has presented challenges regarding the duration of our contingency measures. Carter Lane is currently subject to a 12-month lease which expires on 31 March 2022. There are break clauses in July, September and December 2021. At present we are supporting 78 additional rough sleepers accommodated through the Government’s ‘Everyone In’ call to action. To assist us with our recovery planning we have accelerated the schedule for the long-term assessment centre, effectively bypassing the need for an interim hub.
7. A number of sites have been explored and included and/or discounted. We are currently assessing the viability of two locations while a search for alternative sites

continues. Depending on the chosen location, and the pace and progress of preparatory work already underway, we expect the long-term City Assessment Service to launch in January 2022. Until that time the 'off the street' accommodation offer for the Outreach team will remain Carter Lane.

8. **High Support Hostel** – a Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) for around 35 former rough sleepers with extensive, recorded histories of bedding down in the Square Mile and/or with complex and enduring needs. The support provider will be commissioned separately and may or may not also be the building provider. The service is not expected to be in the Square Mile but should be as close as possible. It was anticipated the service would launch in 2022/23.
9. **Progress:** A tender was advertised on 17 March 2021, closing at noon on 7 April 2021. Subject to an appropriate bid being identified and moderated, we expect the service to launch in the Autumn 2021. This represents a significant acceleration of the original timetable.
10. **Additional interim accommodation** – the measure was designed to increase the overall capacity of our supported accommodation pathway, pending the delivery of the high-support hostel. Spot purchase arrangements with other local authorities was considered most likely.
11. **Progress:** Due to external system pressures and shifting strategic requirements related to COVID-19, (both at the City of London and with other local authorities), this option has not been taken forward. Workstreams in paragraphs 5 and 8 have been accelerated accordingly. Savings made in this area are contributing towards the running costs of Carter Lane.
12. **Enhanced Private Rented Sector (PRS) access** – this measure is designed to complement our growing supported accommodation pathway by offering an enhanced PRS offer, both to rough sleepers and anyone currently within our pathway for whom the PRS would be more suitable than supported living. This element was scheduled to commence in 2021/22.
13. **Progress:** A tender process was undertaken in the new year with three providers submitting successful bids. All three providers are currently partners in our successful No First Night Out (NFNO) homelessness prevention project. A new approved provider framework has been designed with colleagues in City Procurement which allows officers to dispatch referrals to these three providers on a rotating basis. The benefits, established through NFNO, of working with specialist PRS providers will all carry over into the new framework which went live on 1 April 2021.
14. **Outreach enhancement (supported reconnections)** – this role is designed to support our approach to assisting people back to areas or countries where they have connections, and to which they wish to return. This work can be delivered through a role and also a commissioned service. This element was scheduled to commence in 2020/21.

15. **Progress:** Our focus for much of the last year has been on delivering the Government's 'Everyone In' objective and ensuring that all our clients are safeguarded from COVID-19. As part of our recovery planning, we and our commissioned partners are busy looking at the resettlement and move-on options for the 70-plus people we currently have in contingency accommodation. To support this process, we have commissioned DePaul UK to deliver supported reconnections to Romania throughout 2020 and 2021/22.
16. As part of our proposal to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Rough Sleeping Initiative Year 4 Grant Programme (RSI Y4) we are exploring the possibility of procuring access to an Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) qualified advisor to assist clients with immigration advice.
17. **Enhanced Adult Social Care provision** – this allows for the creation of a qualified social worker role shared between City of London Adult Social Care (ASC) and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Service. The role was scheduled to commence in 2021/22.
18. **Progress:** This role was successfully recruited before Christmas with the new officer taking up their role in February 2021.
19. **Anti-social behaviour and community support enhancements** – this element acknowledges the fact that not every person who sleeps rough in the City will accept our offers of assistance. The City of London recognises that rough sleeping is harmful to a person's health and is potentially life threatening. Our clients who continue to sleep rough may also perpetrate anti-social behaviour and crime. This workstream could be a role(s) or a commissioned service and is designed to liaise directly with our residential and business communities as well as our existing partnership of homelessness and rough sleeping service providers. This element is due to commence in 2021/22.
20. **Progress:** This element has not been a priority over the last year. Activity is not scheduled to commence until 2022, although the growth programme budget for next year is profiled to ensure we can deliver enough supported accommodation beds as required to support the combined COVID-19 Recovery Plan and Growth Programme.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Financial implications

21. 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.
22. The City of London MHCLG 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.

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

Conclusion

24. In 2020/21 the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Growth Programme has adapted to the short-term and urgent needs arising from our COVID-19 response and recovery work.
25. Two workstreams - the long-term assessment centre and high support hostel have been accelerated to ensure compatibility with emerging priorities, challenges and opportunities. Both are currently underway and on track for delivery in 2021/22.
26. Two workstreams have progressed on schedule this year – the introduction of a qualified social worker role and implementation of a PRS approved provider framework.
27. Two further workstreams – enhanced supported reconnection function and anti-social behaviour/community support enhancements – have been affected by resources being diverted towards our COVID-19 response and recovery work. Planning is in place to strengthen our supported reconnection offer.
28. Savings that have been found in 2020/21 have been redeployed in support of our wider COVID-19 response and recovery work. This includes the ongoing operation of 45 beds at Carter Lane.

Appendices

- None

Background Papers

- COVID-19 Recovery Plan Progress Report – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-committee, 21 April 2021

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