

HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING SUB COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 21 April 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub Committee held via Microsoft Teams at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Marianne Fredericks (Chairman)	Paul Kennedy, City Church
Munsur Ali	Alderman Bronek Masojada
Randall Anderson	Benjamin Murphy
Mary Durcan	Henrika Priest
Helen Fentimen	Jillian Reid, Safer City Strategic Partnership
Alderman Alison Gowman	Ruby Sayed
Alderman Vincent Keaveny	

Officers:

Nisha Backory	- Community and Children's Services Department
Sinead Collins	- Community and Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community and Children's Services Department
Kirsty Lowe	- Community and Children's Services Department
Will Norman	- Community and Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services Department
Lauren Walker	- Community and Children's Services Department
Simon Young	- Community and Children's Services Department
Bukola Soyombo	- Chamberlain's Department
Kerry Nicholls	- Town Clerk's Department
Sarah Phillips	- Town Clerk's Department
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerk's Department
PC Jason Foster	- City of London Police

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Tijs Broeke and Natasha Lloyd-Owen.

Apologies for lateness were received from Mary Durcan and Alderman Vincent Keaveny.

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

In considering Minute 8: Rough Sleeping Data Q3 2020/21, the Chairman requested an update on the number of individuals who were rough sleeping in the City of London during Quarter 4. The Rough Sleeping Coordinator

confirmed that the number had reduced from 132 in Quarter 3 to 102 in Quarter 4, with ten fewer flow clients and 22 fewer long-term rough sleepers.

The Sub-Committee was advised that following consideration by the Chairman and Officers it was proposed to put the Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference to the meeting of the Community and Children's Services Committee on 30 April 2021 for final approval with the below proposed amendment to Item 2:

"To have an overview of government and regional policies on rough sleeping; and advise the Grand Committee of their impact on the City of London Corporation's Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Strategy and practice arrangements."

RESOLVED, that the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 22 February 2021 be approved.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Members received the Sub-Committee's outstanding actions list and the following update was noted:

- The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee Away Day would be held at 1.00pm on 15 July 2021. Groundswell had been invited to attend the Away Day to give an update on its City Voices work which would provide a foundation for the future strategic direction of the work of the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED, that outstanding actions be noted.

5. COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an update on the COVID-19 Recovery Plan and the following point was made:

- In May 2020, the City of London Corporation developed a COVID-19 Recovery Plan to ensure the safe recovery of the City's rough sleeping population following the COVID-19 period and develop new interventions to increase the long-term capacity of the service. Significant progress had been made in delivering the Plan with almost 400 individuals supported into accommodation since the start of the COVID-19 period in March 2021. There were currently 57 individuals being accommodated at Carter Lane hostel and Travelodge London City and work to support these individuals to move into suitable accommodation was ongoing. In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping confirmed that use of the Carter Lane hostel would cease at the end of December 2022, by which time it was anticipated the High Support Hostel would be operational.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

6. **STATUTORY HOMELESSNESS ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT 2020/21**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services presenting the Statutory Homelessness Annual Summary 2020/21 and the following points were made:

- There had been a significant increase in the number of approaches to the City of London Corporation's statutory homelessness service during the COVID-19 period, including households living in precarious situations as well as those affected by domestic violence and relationship breakdown. To help manage this increase in demand for services, new working arrangements had been introduced including online self-referral, phone assessment and a triage service to determine homelessness, eligibility and local connection for all approaches. Work had also been undertaken to introduce a more collaborative way of working, both with existing partners such as the *No First Night Out* team and by fostering new working relationships, including with temporary accommodation providers. A Committee Member was pleased to note the increased emphasis on collaborative working and underlined the need to continue to build on this. Another Member suggested this include regional partners and the Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping confirmed that the City of London Corporation had good links with sub-regional bodies and forums which met regularly to discuss changes in legislation and policy as well as share good practice. The City of London Corporation was also a member of the Mayor of London's *Life Off the Streets* taskforce.
- The Chairman queried whether there were enough resources in place to support statutory homelessness services in light of the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as well as the pressures of the COVID-19 period. The Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping advised that the COVID-19 period had placed significant pressure on staff and resources, but a focus was being placed on developing a sustainable service model that would be sufficient to meet future service demand. In response to a question from a Committee Member, the Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping confirmed that forecasting was used to review and anticipate future demand for the City of London Corporation's statutory homelessness services and that a range of forecasting data would be presented to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 28 June 2021 as well as to the Away Day on 15 July 2021 for Members' information.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

7. **GROWTH PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services on the growth programme and the following point was made:

- During the 2020/21 financial year, the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Growth Programme had adapted to the short-term and urgent needs arising from the COVID-19 response. The enhanced Private Rental Sector approved provider framework had been launched on 1 April 2021, and workstreams relating to the City Assessment Centre and High Support Hostel had been accelerated and were on track for delivery during the 2021/22 financial year. Savings identified during the 2020/21 financial year had been redeployed to support the wider COVID-19 response and recovery work, including the ongoing operation of 45 beds at Carter Lane hostel. Work to introduce an enhanced supported reconnection function and anti-social behaviour/community support enhancements had been delayed by the COVID-19 period, but plans were in place to strengthen the Corporation's supported reconnection offer.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

8. SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PROTOCOL 2020/21

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services providing an interim report on the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for Winter 2020/21 and the following point was made:

- During Winter 2020/21, SWEP was activated a total of ten times across 41 nights. A total of 35 homeless or rough sleeping individuals had been brought into accommodation since 23 December 2020, of which 33 had immediately transferred to other accommodation once SWEP had been deactivated. In response to a question from a Committee Member, the Rough Sleeping Service Manager explained that the CHAIN multi-agency database recorded details of individuals accessing SWEP provision and that this ensured individuals were not double counted within homelessness datasets. A Committee Member noted the role of SWEP as a means of providing early intervention to individuals by supporting them into appropriate accommodation. Another Committee Member underlined the need to consider climate implications linked to activations of the SWEP in relation to all forms of extreme weather. The Assistant Director (People) confirmed that the Corporate and Strategic implications included within the Corporation's report template included Climate implications and this would form a part of all future reporting of the use of the SWEP.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

9. RSI YEAR 4 FUNDING PROPOSAL

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services presenting the Rough Sleeping Initiative Year 4 Funding Proposal and the following points were made:

- The Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) was launched by the Government in March 2018 with the aim of reducing overall rough sleeping numbers in

the 83 local authorities with the highest numbers of people sleeping rough, based on the 2017 rough sleeping snapshot. The City of London Corporation had submitted a proposal for Year 4 of the RSI scheme totalling £1,070,244. This included continuing existing RSI interventions from Year 3 including a Rough Sleeping Coordinator, the Tower Hamlets and CoL Navigator Project, an additional City outreach worker, two additional Anchor House EU beds and continuation of the *No First Night Out* principle of homelessness prevention to part-fund emergency accommodation. It was proposed to introduce further interventions in April 2021 including a Rough Sleeping Tenancy Support Officer, Psychotherapy service and the Mobile Support Intervention Team.

- In response to a question from a Member, the Rough Sleeping Service Manager confirmed that a quarter of the RSI Year 3 grant totalling £347,500 would fund all existing interventions from April to June 2021, including a number of staff on fixed-term contracts. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government would notify local authorities of the outcome of the Year 4 RSI funding award process in May 2021, at which point it was hoped to extend the fixed-term contracts of these staff for a further year. The Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping confirmed that the difficulties of long-term planning in relation to the RSI Grant had been flagged with the Government; however, as the planned programme had been co-produced with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, it was anticipated that the grant award was likely to be successful. A further update on the RSI Year 4 Funding Proposal would be presented to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 28 June 2021.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

10. **CITY OF LONDON POLICE UPDATE**

Members received an update of the Superintendent of the City of London Police and the following point was made:

- Operation Luscombe, which aimed to identify issues and support those who were living on the streets, had been run at minimal capacity for much of the COVID-19 period but was now relaunching with an intervention hub due to take place at 1.00pm on 28 April 2021 at St. Botolph without Bishopsgate Church. This would be supported by increased digitisation with Operation Luscombe now accessible via front-facing devices used by the Sector Policing Team and Partnership and Intervention Hub. This functionality was being delivered at minimal cost but it was likely that funding would be sought from the Safer City Partnership Strategy Board as it was rolled out to further Police teams. The Police Representative confirmed that since the launch of the City Assessment Service, changes had been made to ensure that individuals receiving support within the City of London were not excluded. A Member emphasised the importance of ensuring that begging levels did not increase as the City of London exited the COVID-19 period.

RESOLVED, that the update be noted.

11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was one item of other business.

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their hard work and dedication during the 2020/21 municipal year. The COVID-19 period had been very challenging but had achieved a number of excellent outcomes for individuals and households affected by homelessness and rough sleeping.

13. 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
14-17

Para no
3

14. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2021 be approved.

15. CITY OF LONDON POLICE NON-PUBLIC UPDATE

The Sub-Committee heard a non-public update of the Chief Inspector of the City of London Police.

16. QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE WHILE THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There were no non-public questions.

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

There was one item of other business.

The meeting closed at 2.50 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Kerry Nicholls 020 7 332 1262
kerry.nicholls@cityoflondon.gov.uk