

Committee:	Dated:
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee – For Information	06/12/2021
Subject: Transition 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 of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Will Norman, Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping	

Summary

Between May 2020 and October 2021 Members were provided with update reports regarding the City of London COVID-19 Recovery Plan. At the October 2021 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee, Members were informed that planning had evolved beyond COVID-19 recovery into transitional planning. These arrangements consider the decant of Carter Lane and the progress of both capital projects – the City Assessment Service and the High Support Hostel. As we move through the winter period, the transitional plan will also consider our winter planning for rough sleepers and dedicated Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) arrangements.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. On 2 July 2021, the Pan London Housing Needs and Homelessness Group met. This quarterly group is attended by Statutory Homelessness leads from Greater London local authorities, London Councils, Greater London Authority (GLA), Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) – now called the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as of September 2021 – and Homeless Link. A return to ‘business as usual’ was discussed. While no firm resolution was agreed, a consensus was reached that most councils had already adjusted their operating position closer to that of ‘business as usual’.

2. On 2 August 2021, the City of London ceased operating an 'Everyone In' approach and returned to the substantive position of 'In for Good'. As with other local authorities, this affects our statutory homelessness and rough sleeping services.
3. The City of London is currently engaged in two capital projects which will increase the overall capacity within our supported accommodation stock, as well as a more diverse offering and clearer pathways for progression. These projects are interrelated with the decant and ultimate closure of the Carter Lane site.

Current Position

Carter Lane

4. Planning is underway to ensure a smooth handover of the Carter Lane site to the Youth Hostel Association (YHA). The City's lease expires on 31 March 2022 and no further extension is being considered.
5. On 15 November 2021 we began an organised wind-up of the service, steadily reducing service capacity week on week. The number of beds will reduce by approximately two each week until the week commencing 21 February 2022 when the last two to four guests will leave. The service will be closed to new referrals from this time.
6. By the week commencing 28 February 2022, the service will be empty of guests and a skeleton staff team will be maintained to ensure the security of the premises and facilitate access to contractors.
7. Outreach assessment beds will be the last beds reduced. Ten are allocated until the beginning of February 2022.
8. Between 28 February and 28 March 2022, we will be engaged in a 'making good' work programme to return the premises to the condition they were in when we took occupancy in April 2020. A schedule of condition was commissioned at this time and will act as a reference point.
9. On 15 November 2021 a parallel work programme commenced co-ordinated by YHA in conjunction with their contractors PAYE. Under the terms of the headline lease (between YHA and City of London) YHA must complete essential facia works to restore deteriorating masonry. This requires approximately six months' work, starting with the erection of scaffolding to protect staff, guests and passers-by from falling masonry.
10. This work programme includes intrusive noise levels and use of pressurised washing equipment, necessitating the sealing of windows. To minimise disruption to service delivery, this work programme (with the exception of scaffolding for safety reasons) has been delayed so that works will be carried out on vacated rooms only.

High Support Hostel

11. We have identified an initial cohort of 10 Carter Lane residents to move to the High Support Hostel when phase 1 (annexe) of the work programme is complete. This is currently scheduled to take place in mid-January 2022.
12. Phase 2 (the remaining 19 rooms) is expected to start at the end of March 2022, coinciding with the lease expiry at Carter Lane. Given that we anticipate zero occupancy of Carter Lane from late February 2022, the rooms becoming available in phase 2 will be allocated to those occupying B&B or temporary accommodation (TA), or rough sleepers who are able to move directly from the street.

City Assessment Service (CAS)

13. This service is currently scheduled to begin operating in spring 2022.
14. The CAS will provide 14 beds to the Outreach team as a 'route off the street' offer to all rough sleepers, whether known to our services or not. This function is currently being delivered by the 10 beds allocated to the Outreach team at Carter Lane.
15. Currently there is a 15-week break scheduled between the closure of Carter Lane and the opening of the CAS. This will require contingency planning to ensure that the Outreach team retain a 'route of the street' option. 'Everyone In' demonstrated how B&B and TA can be used creatively and effectively for this purpose, particularly when support is strengthened with the addition of dedicated support. Therefore, we will extend the successful Mobile Intervention Support Team (MIST) and explore the block booking of hotel rooms to ensure service continuity through this period. Please see paragraph 18.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

16. The City of London SWEP plan is in place for winter 2021–2022. This year we have allocated five beds at Carter Lane to complement beds and rooms elsewhere in our pathway. As in previous years, we will operate a flexible model using hotel rooms and TA to expand and contract the size of the offer depending on weather conditions and demand.
17. In the event that we have a sustained SWEP activation and/or a particularly severe bout of weather, we will consider the reallocation of rooms at Carter Lane vacated as part of the decant plan. While this is not ideal, it does give the service some comfort that we have a high level of preparedness regardless of weather conditions.

Winter Pressures Fund

18. The DLUHC is making grant funding available again this winter. In previous years we have received funding from the Cold Weather Fund (£77,800 in 2020–2021). This grant programme has been expanded into a Winter Pressures Fund for 2021–

2022. We are currently co-producing a proposal with our Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) advisor. The following elements are relevant to this transition plan:

- three-month contract extension for MIST, taking the service to the end of the financial year
- hotel block booking or hotel budget for sole use of Thames Reach Outreach Team
- funded Crimscott no recourse to public funds (NRPF) assessment bed
- funded Anchor House bed.

Key Data

19. The following points highlight the key data available:

- High Support Hostel (HSH) cohort 1 is the initial group of 10 clients moving from Carter Lane to the HSH annexe.
- Total clients with CSOs refers to all credible service offers currently issued.
- TA clients are those placed in temporary accommodation placements with support from MIST provided by Thames Reach.
- Variance refers to movement over the past week. Future reports may include variance over the last transition plan report.
- European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS) refers to outstanding applications to the Government's scheme.

	W/C 08/11/21	Variance
Total clients in Transition Plan accommodation	57	Up
Carter Lane population	41	Down
Carter Lane assessment clients	11	No change
Carter Lane long-term clients	20	No change
Carter Lane HSH cohort 1	10	No change
EEA clients with outstanding EUSS applications	12	No change
Total clients with CSO	34	Up
B&B clients	3	Up
TA clients	13	Up

20. Of the 57 clients currently in transition plan accommodation: 34 have been issued a CSO; 11 are in assessments beds and yet to receive an offer; and the remaining 12 have outstanding EUSS applications which currently prevents CSO's being created and issued.

21. The service has an open dialogue with the Home Office regarding the accelerated processing of remaining EUSS applications for verified rough sleepers.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

There are no corporate and strategic implications:

- Strategic implications – none
- Financial implications – none
- Resource implications – none
- Legal implications – none
- Risk implications – none
- Equalities implications – none
- Climate implications – none
- Security implications – none

Conclusion

22. The decant plan for Carter Lane commenced on 15 November 2021, reducing by approximately two guests each week until the end of February when we expect the last guests to leave.
23. A basic staff team will remain on site at Carter Lane to facilitate access to contractors and provide cover for SWEP should it arise.
24. March 2022 has been set aside for a work programme to restore the premises in anticipation of returning them to YHA on 1 April 2022.
25. Contingency planning is in place to cover the gap between Carter Lane closing and the City Assessment Centre opening. This plan uses additional funding provided through the DLUHC Winter pressures Fund.
26. Most clients have a CSO in place, the exceptions being those on assessment beds and clients with outstanding EUSS applications.
27. Carter Lane occupancy levels have begun to fall, however, use of TA and B&B accommodation has risen.
28. Carter Lane will provide flexible SWEP capacity this winter.

Appendices

- None

Will Norman

Head of Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping

T: 077 0137 2884

E: will.norman@cityoflondon.gov.uk