

Committee: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee – For Information	Dated: 14/02/2022
Subject: Transition Plan 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

At the October 2021 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee, Members were informed about how 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 Transition Plan will also account for our winter planning for rough sleepers and dedicated Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) arrangements.

The City of London were notified of new grant funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on 20 December 2021. The Protect and Vaccinate fund supports local authority accommodation and vaccination efforts through awards linked to rough sleeping numbers. This report summarises how this funding will be used to support contingency accommodation arrangements as we move through the Transition Plan.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. 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.

2. This Transition Plan report replaces separate COVID-19 Recovery Plan and Growth Programme reports.

Current Position

Carter Lane

3. Planning is in place to return the Carter Lane site to the Youth Hostel Association (YHA). The City's current lease expires on 31 March 2022.
4. On 15 November 2021 we commenced an organised wind-up of the service, steadily reducing service capacity week on week. The number of beds will continue to reduce until the week commencing 21 February 2022, when the last two to four guests are scheduled to leave.
5. By the week commencing 28 February 2022, the service is scheduled to be empty of guests, with a skeleton staff team remaining to ensure the security of the premises and facilitate access to contractors.
6. Outreach assessment beds will be the last beds reduced. Ten are allocated until the beginning of February 2022.
7. Between 28 February and 28 March 2022, we will undertake 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.
8. 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 a five-to-six-month work programme.
9. The works involve the use of pressurised washing equipment which necessitates the sealing of windows. To remain compliant with public health guidance, these works can only be undertaken on vacant sections of the building. This means works have so far been limited to the erection of scaffolding and protective sheeting. The work programme is scheduled to recommence in February 2022.

High Support Hostel

10. The mobilisation date for the hostel has been postponed pending a revised work programme to reflect an increase in scope. The work programme is expected to commence before the end of March 2022 and last for 24 weeks.
11. At the 6 December Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee, Members were presented with a phased introduction of guests aligned with a work programme that concentrated on an annexe with 10 rooms in phase 1. At this time, it has not been confirmed if the new work programme will follow a similar method, or if a phased introduction of guests is operationally advantageous.

12. Contingency planning is underway to ensure that long-term guests at Carter Lane who we intend to continue to accommodate (approximately 11 at this time) are found interim accommodation pending the opening of the new service.
13. Work is currently scheduled to commence by the end of March 2022 for a period of 24 weeks. This offers a potential project launch of September 2022.

City Assessment Service (CAS)

14. This project has been delayed allowing for informal stakeholder and community consultation ahead of the planning application. The service is now scheduled to open in the autumn of 2022.
15. Contingency planning is underway to ensure that there is no loss of assessment bed capacity or 'off the street' offer after the scheduled end of the Carter Lane lease and the mobilisation of the new CAS. It remains possible that a single contingency solution can be sourced to fulfil the requirement for assessment beds and the long-term Carter Lane cohort.
16. Hotel accommodation is likely to form at least part of the contingency solution. In this event, support staff will be allocated to clients through either a visiting service such as the Mobile Intervention Support Team (MIST) or a 24-hour service, depending on the setting.
17. Revenue savings from the late running project will be used to fund contingency plans.

Protect and Vaccinate Fund

18. On 20 December 2021 DLUHC launched a new fund aimed at assisting local authorities to sustain existing accommodation measures mobilised during the pandemic and, where necessary, to launch additional services to tackle the Omicron wave through vaccination and housing. The City of London was awarded £358,736 in total, with £317,664 ring-fenced for accommodation interventions.
19. The accommodation element of the award will be used to fund additional hotel room accommodation and contribute to the contingency plans being designed to take over from Carter Lane.

Key Data

20. The following points highlight the key data:

- High Support Hostel (HSH) cohort 1 is the initial group of clients potentially moving from Carter Lane to the HSH annexe (under a phased approach).
- Total clients with Credible Service Offers refers to all CSOs 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 previous Transition Plan report (6 December 2021)

- European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS) refers to outstanding applications to the Government's scheme.

	W/C 17/01/22	Variance
Total clients in Transition Plan accommodation	60	Up
Carter Lane population	24	Down
Carter Lane assessment clients	9	Down
Carter Lane long-term clients	6	Down
Carter Lane HSH cohort 1	9	Down
EEA clients with outstanding EUSS applications	6	Down
Total clients with CSO	37	Up
B&B clients	23	Up
TA clients	13	Up

21. The total number of clients falling within the scope of the Transition Plan has increased since December 2021 (from 57 to 60). This is due to predicted winter pressures driven by SWEP and our overarching 'In for Good' principle.

22. To support the decant schedule at Carter Lane, further SWEP demands will be met by our existing supported accommodation pathway and additional hotel rooms. This offer is flexible and driven by demand and does not represent a reduction in available SWEP capacity.

23. The Carter Lane population has decreased (from 41 to 24), but the rate of reduction is slightly behind that which we projected. Nine beds are occupied by the Outreach team for assessment purposes. Six guests are awaiting long-term resettlement options (down from 20) with the remaining 11 identified for the High Support Hostel.

24. The number of clients placed in B&B or temporary accommodation placements has increased to 36. Clients are supported through a combination of the Thames Reach MIST service and the distribution of electronic devices and mobile SIM cards funded by the DLUHC Winter Pressures Fund.

25. The number of clients awaiting the outcome of an EUSS application has reduced from 12 to 6. Two of these were successfully resolved using the Home Office fast track process. The remaining four either found employment and left the service or abandoned before the process was completed.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

26. 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

27. The decant plan for Carter Lane commenced on 15 November 2021; 33 guests now reside there, down from 45 at capacity and 41 at the time of the previous update to Members in December 2021.
28. Due to winter pressures and our commitment to the 'In for Good principle, the number of clients falling within the scope of the Transition Plan has risen from 57 to 60.
29. The Carter Lane decant schedule requires us to divert future SWEP admissions to our supported accommodation pathway and hotel bookings. This does not affect the SWEP offer to the client or reduce our capacity.
30. Contingency planning is underway to cover the gap between Carter Lane closing and the City Assessment Centre and High Support Hostel openings. Options include the procurement of additional hotel rooms on a contract basis or multiple spot purchase arrangements on a needs basis. Planning includes the provision of adequate support staff on either a visiting or 24-hour basis.
31. Funding for the contingency plan will be found through additional grant funding from DLUHC through the Protect and Vaccinate Fund, complemented by revenue savings from the late running capital projects.

Appendices

- None

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