

Committee:	Dated:
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee	30/11/2022
Subject: Severe Weather Emergency Protocol 2022–2023	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: Clare Chamberlain, Interim Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
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Summary

This report introduces Members to the City of London’s Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) for rough sleepers for the winter season 2022–2023. The report draws attention to material changes and protocol updates from last year. Also included are new hot weather arrangements, drafted as a response to last summer’s sustained high temperatures. This report is limited to the annual review of the protocol and confirmation of arrangements for the forthcoming year. A separate report summarising SWEP activity and performance is submitted to Members each spring.

The City of London SWEP protocol for 2022–2023 is included as Appendix 1.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. In London, SWEP activations are triggered by the Greater London Authority (GLA), however, each individual borough may activate or deactivate SWEP arrangements according to their own protocols. Broadly, most local authorities will follow the GLA protocol.
2. Historically, the GLA activated SWEP when there were three consecutive nights of sub-zero temperatures in Central London (Westminster). In 2017 this was amended to a single night forecast of sub-zero temperatures anywhere in Greater London.

3. The City's SWEP protocol is reviewed every year to take into account learning from the previous year and any emerging policy or strategy information. A two-week partner consultation is built into this process.
4. The GLA consult with borough rough sleeping leads through the quarterly GLA 'Leads Meeting'.
5. Individual borough SWEP bed capacity is expected to reflect rough sleeping need, and each borough reports its arrangements to the GLA every autumn.
6. The GLA provides 'Pan-London Overflow SWEP' beds to add capacity where boroughs exhaust their SWEP arrangements, or where London endures a particularly severe or lengthy SWEP activation. Ordinarily, this is only accessible after boroughs have used all available local capacity.

Updates to the protocol

7. The following sections of the protocol (Appendix 1) have seen material changes. Paragraphs 9 to 11 relate to cold weather arrangements.
8. The GLA has published updated guidance for 2022–2023, therefore this new guidance has been included in the 2022–2023 City SWEP Protocol.
9. Section 3 – has been amended to reflect guidance from the GLA and Public Health England regarding the use of shared air spaces and communal settings. The section describes how shared air spaces will be considered, but only where other options are unavailable and the risk of rough sleeping in cold weather outweighs the risk of contracting a transmissible infection. Shared air spaces are not part of the City's first-tier SWEP response.
10. Section 4 – has been updated to show the settings the City will use for winter 2022–2023. The new Grange Road service is a new addition.
11. Section 5 – includes a small update to methodology to prioritise Grange Road.
12. The summer of 2022 was the hottest and driest on record, with two heat waves and record temperatures. London saw daytime highs in excess of 40° and sustained periods around 35°. This was combined with mild night-time temperatures.
13. GLA SWEP guidance from 2021–2022 does not account for hot weather, although essential safeguarding practices have been widely adopted for some time. Appendix 3 of the new protocol provides a clear methodology for the City of London and its commissioned providers.
14. The aim of hot weather arrangements is to prevent risk to health and potential loss of life during periods of extreme hot weather. This is achieved by:
 - using a distinct service offer of practical advice and guidance

- applying a proactive shift model to seek out the most vulnerable
- drawing on the assistance of local day service providers.

15. Met Office Heat Alert Levels 1–4 will be used as a framework, with heatwave conditions being applicable at level 3. Practical advice and assistance includes:

- seeking shade and avoiding the direct sun (including distribution of sunscreen)
- wearing appropriate clothing
- reducing alcohol consumption
- remaining properly hydrated (including distribution of bottled water)
- seeking assistance if feeling unwell.

16. Additional support will be offered to assist clients to access designated GLA ‘cool spaces’ and the Providence Row Dellow Centre. Shifts will be refocused around the daytime when the effects of extreme heat are most obvious.

17. At Heat Alert Level 4, the City of London will make air-conditioned spaces available at the Guildhall complex.

Key Data

There is no data associated with this report.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. **Strategic implications** – N/A

19. **Financial implications** – N/A

20. **Resource implications** – N/A

21. **Legal implications** – N/A

22. **Risk implications** – N/A

23. **Equalities implications** – N/A

24. **Climate implications** – N/A

25. **Security implications** – N/A

Conclusion

26. The City of London SWEP Protocol for 2022–2023 has been updated to account for revised thinking regarding the use of shared air spaces and the introduction of the Grange Road service into our pathway.

27. The City's approach to using shared air spaces (where the risk of not acting outweighs the risk of transmissible infection) is consistent with Public Health England guidance, and best practice advice issued by the GLA.

28. A dedicated appendix for hot weather arrangements has been inserted as Appendix 3 of the protocol. Periods of extreme heat, as set out by the Met Office Heat Alert Levels, will now have a focused SWEP response akin to the cold weather response.

29. Hot weather arrangements have been adapted to suit the nature of the risk, with a focus on practical advice and guidance, adaptive shift rotas and access to cool spaces during the day.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City of London SWEP Protocol 2022–2023

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