

Committees: General Purposes Committee of Aldermen – For decision Community and Children’s Services Committee – For decision Resource Allocation Sub (Policy and Resources) Committee – For decision	Dated: 05/12/2023 13/12/2023 24/01/2024
Subject: Safe Havens in the City of London	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Outcome 1
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Decision
Report author: Valeria Cadena, Community Safety Manager	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to ask for Members’ support for the delivery of Safe Havens across the City of London Corporation buildings and estates. The aim is to help tackle and prevent violence against women and girls in public spaces and make the Square Mile a safer place to live, work, study and visit.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the report
- Endorse the Safe Haven scheme.

Main Report

Background

1. The Safer City Partnership is working with the Safer Business Network to help us create ‘Safe Havens’ for women and girls in the Square Mile. Safe Havens will assist women and girls who are feeling unsafe, harassed or in a vulnerable situation to continue their journey by helping them to contact emergency services, provide water, toilets or other basic facilities, or by offering useful helpline numbers to the affected person.
2. Safe Havens are defined as: "a place of temporary refuge for a person to facilitate their onward journey. Whilst the Safe Haven cannot provide specialist

interventions, staff can contact emergency services and/or signpost to specialist services where needed” (Appendix 1).

3. Safe Havens will not intervene in someone’s problems directly or speak to another person involved. Reception and security staff would receive training on how to deal with these situations so the Safe Haven can provide an immediate place of safety for women and girls at risk or in a vulnerable situation.
4. The basic criteria for a Safe Haven would include access to water, electricity, wi-fi or a landline telephone, charging point for mobile phone, a chair/seat, access to a toilet, trained staff with a list of support network contact details and relevant public liability insurance. Ideally the Safe Haven area must be covered by working CCTV. The accreditation will come with the Safe Haven Logo to be displayed in a window/door (Appendix 1).

Current Position

5. Our City of London buildings (Guildhall, Mansion House, Central Criminal Court, Bastion House and libraries) already have most of the requirements and we would like them to become accredited in the Square Mile to set up an example to all businesses.
6. There are no costs for the training as the Safer City Partnership has already provided funding for this initiative in the Square Mile. The training given to reception and security staff is in-person, takes around one hour, and will be free of charge to all City of London Corporation buildings.
7. The training will enable the venue employees to feel confident in dealing with members of the public, bearing in mind that they cannot provide specialist support. Each venue will appoint a ‘champion’ who will report directly to the Safer Business Network, and they will collate and evaluate all feedback received. The training provided by Safer Business Network aims to improve learners’ skills, knowledge, and confidence in identifying vulnerability and making appropriate interventions to support the delivery of a Safe Haven. Upon completion of the training, participants should be able to train future Safe Haven staff and champions.
8. Once we are part of the scheme, we would be included as a delivery partner in communications. We will also be included in any London digital communications for the public to identify the location of the Safe Havens. The City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service will know about the location of the Safe Havens and will provide support during their operational hours.

Southwark and Lambeth have joined forces to bring the same accreditation to their boroughs, to promote safety for women and girls.

Options

9. There are three options that can be taken:
 - Not to support.

- To support (Recommended). The Guildhall, Mansion House, Central Criminal Court, Bastion House and Libraries, already have most of what is required to become Safe Havens, and therefore the one-hour training can be rolled out to start the accreditation.
- In 2024, we can provide an evaluation to this forum to ask for your support again to expand this scheme to the wider City institutions such as the Barbican, Markets, and educational and community centres across the City of London Corporation.

Proposals

10. If the recommended option 2 is chosen, the Guildhall, Mansion House, Central Criminal Court, Bastion House and Libraries already have reception/security staff who can be trained, space for people to take a stop and make a call, landlines and toilets that the public can use. This covers most of what is required to become a Safe Haven. The one-hour training can be rolled out to start the accreditation.
11. By supporting this initiative, we will lead by example, promote safety within and across the Square Mile, motivate and encourage other businesses to become part of the Safe Havens scheme, and work actively to provide safe places for women and girls.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. There are no strategic implications directly related to this report.

- Financial implications – N/A
- Resource implications – N/A
- Legal implications – N/A
- Risk implications – N/A
- Equalities implications – N/A
- Climate implications – N/A
- Security implications – N/A

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Safe Haven Information, Safer Business Network

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