

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee	Dated: 21/09/2026
Subject: Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping – Quality Assurance System, Progress and Next Steps	Public report: For Information (Non-public Appendix)
This proposal: delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Providing Excellent Services 5,6 & 14
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	Not applicable
What is the source of Funding?	Not applicable
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Not applicable
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Summary

This report provides Members with an overview of the Quality Assurance Process for commissioned services within the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Service Area; an update on outcomes of the reviews undertaken; and information on next steps.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Service currently commissions a number of different services from a range of providers to help address homelessness and rough sleeping originating from the City, and to support those affected by homelessness to recover and resettle.

2. A Quality Assurance Framework was developed in 2024 to provide a framework to facilitate quality audits of commissioned services and set standards for the day-to-day operation of services.
3. Establishing the Quality Assurance Framework enabled commissioners to embark on a series of Quality Audits of commissioned services.

Current Position

The Quality Assurance Framework

4. Standards are set in the following areas:

1	Client Casework
2	Accommodation, Health & Safety and Fire
3	Quality Management
4	Education, Training and Employment (ETE) and Progression
5	User Involvement and Co-Production
6	Safeguarding
7	Third-Party Involvement
8	Health
9	Staffing and Staff Support
10	Finances
11	Added Value
12	Psychologically Informed Environments
13	Data Safety

5. Within the subject areas above, a set of goals and statements outline what the services are expected to achieve. Not all will be relevant to all services.
6. For contracts commencing after the introduction of the Quality Assurance Process, the framework is now included in the Service Specifications along with an outline of which sections will apply. This ensures that it is embedded within the service contract.

Service Reviews

7. The initial programme of service reviews was focused on services within the Supported Housing Pathway:
 - Grange Road High Support Hostel: November 2024 to March 2025
 - Crimscott Street Low to Medium Supported Housing: April 2025 to August 2025
 - The Lodge and City Lodge: July 2026 to September 2026 (ongoing)
8. In this timeframe, Rough Sleeper services have been separately reviewed by Homeless Link, reported to this Sub-Committee on 1 October 2025.
9. Each service review has a number of stages:

- Introductory presentation and meeting between commissioners and provider
- Provider self-assessment of performance against framework
- Commissioning-led desktop review of self-assessment and information gathering
- On-site verification visit
- Staff and client survey or interview
- Further desktop review of findings
- Draft report, findings and recommendations
- Provider consultation
- Final report and recommendations/Action Plan

Outcomes

10. Please see scheme-specific outcomes information presented in Appendix 1 (Non-Public).
11. For each audit area identified in the final report as “not met”, the report outlines a recommendation for improvement.
12. The final report also outlines general audit observations and makes recommendations on how to improve practice.
13. For each scheme that has had a service review completed, an Action Plan has been agreed with the provider to address audit findings which is in turn tracked via the contract monitoring process.

Next Steps

14. Two service Action Plans are live for the High Support Hostel and Crimscott Street Low to Medium Supported Housing.
15. A third is being drafted following the service review at The Lodges.
16. The three service reviews undertaken have undoubtedly been successful and feedback from the providers has been overwhelmingly positive. However, the process is overburdened with administration and lacks efficiency and agility.
17. Plans and improvements include:
 - Merging Quality Assurance Framework subject areas to reduce to a maximum of six overall
 - Inclusion of a set of service-specific standards to enable a focus on fewer standard services

- Automation of some stages of the process; moving away from Word/Excel documents to MS Forms and online mediums that can self-populate and update
- Mini reviews/Follow-up audits being programmed into the process
- Rollout to other service areas, both accommodation based and non-accommodation based.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic Implications – none

Financial implications – none

Resource implications – Lessons from the first round of service reviews included that they are resource and administration intensive. Improvements to the process are now being developed to mitigate this and to make the process more fluid.

Legal implications - none

Risk implications – none

Equalities implications – The Quality Assurance Framework includes standards on Equalities and Diversity within a number of service standards, designed to ensure that Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) workplans are in place for each service.

Climate implications – none

Security implications – none

Conclusion

18. The Quality Assurance Process in place has assisted the City in ensuring that services are operating at a high level and are committed to continuous improvement.
19. The benefits of a programme of on-site service reviews are felt by both commissioners and providers alike.
20. Improvement Action Plans are live in two services, with one being drafted for a third service area.
21. An update on Service Reviews can be presented to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Sub-Committee annually.

Appendices

- Non-public appendix 1 – Audit Summaries

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