

Minutes

‘No Nights Sleeping Rough’ taskforce, 06 November 2018, Union Street

Attendees

Joe Apea	LB Newham	David Orton (notes)	GLA
Guy Arnold	LB Camden	Rachel Pascual	MHCLG
Colin Ansell	LB Newham	Chris Pelham	City of London Corporation
Kath Dane	LB Tower Hamlets	Jonathan Qureshi	GLA
Paul Davis	LB Lambeth	Howard Sinclair	St Mungo’s
David Eastwood	GLA	Jon Sparkes	Crisis
Debra Levison	GLA	Bill Tidnam	Thames Reach
Deborah Halling	GLA	Jeremy Swain	MHCLG
Matt Harrison	Homeless Link	Jennifer Travassos	Westminster City Council
James Murray (chair)	GLA		
Luke Oates	GLA		

Apologies

Rick Henderson (Matt Harrison deputising) Homeless Link

1	Welcome, introductions and apologies	
2	MHCLG update	
	<p>Jeremy Swain (JS) presented an update on the progress of the Government’s Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI). Presentation slides are circulated with the minutes.</p> <p>Members of the group responded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They welcomed the RSI programme and the opportunities to do more to address rough sleeping which had been created through the funding. • They queried whether MHCLG will report on what services have been working particularly well. JS said that a comprehensive evaluation of the 2018/9 programme will be completed to inform future RSI funding allocations and high performing services will be showcased to other councils. • JS confirmed that MHCLG are welcoming regional bids for funding and are looking at a pan-London bid under the Rough Sleeping Navigators funding stream. • It was suggested that longer-term funding is required to enable authorities to more effectively tackle rough sleeping. It was noted that it takes six to nine months to commission a service, which was not possible under the RSI funding regime. This hinders chances of implementing a new service which delivers sustained outcomes. • They discussed the short timeframe for service mobilisation under the RSI strategy and the challenges this presented. Recruiting high quality staff on such tight timelines, and with so many other services also recruiting new staff, was highlighted as a challenge that organisations which had received RSI funding were facing. • They stated that more needs to be done to provide a solution for non-UK nationals who are sleeping rough and that the Government should address the systematic issues which make it difficult to support non-UK nationals to 	

	<p>leave the streets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some boroughs, the flow of new rough sleepers to the streets is the key issue. The numbers of those in the living on the streets cohort is relatively low but large increases in new rough sleepers are pushing overall numbers up. There should be more focus on preventative measures. <p>JS said he would share feedback on the RSI funding process with colleagues at MHCLG.</p> <p>Rachel Pascual (RP) presented an overview of the Government’s Rough Sleeping Strategy. Presentation slides are circulated with the minutes.</p> <p>Members of the group responded as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cross-governmental approach is encouraging but those who attended the Government’s Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel perceived there to be varying levels of enthusiasm and commitment from other departments. Whilst the strategy is a good first step towards reducing rough sleeping, there needs to be an adequate balance with preventive measures which genuinely address the root causes of rough sleeping. The Rapid Rehousing Pathway was commended as a good approach to ensuring that people are quickly supported to leave the streets and sustain accommodation. However, it was raised that the deadlines given for applying to this funding stream had been unrealistic. It was suggested that the £5 million fund to help non-UK nationals who sleep rough was insufficient given the magnitude of this problem, especially in London. A number of attendees agreed that this was the greatest issue facing councils in London, with effective policy change and adequate funding urgently required. 	
<p>3</p>	<p>Update on GLA services</p>	
	<p>Jonathan Qureshi (JQ) and David Orton (DO) updated the group on GLA rough sleeping services and new initiatives. Details can be found in the appended document.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the initiative to improve mental health provision for people sleeping rough. This included the challenges which can be faced in securing buy-in from social services and mental health trusts for initiatives which will increase referrals, and in finding suitable mental health practitioners for such roles.</p> <p>JQ discussed some provisional future plans for GLA rough sleeping services, including providing a more rapid outreach response to StreetLink referrals and developing a NSNO-style model for those who are not new to the streets.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP)</p>	
	<p>Luke Oates (LO) provided an overview of the GLA’s SWEP plans for this winter. Full details can be found in the appended document.</p> <p>The group welcomed the new approach to SWEP, including pan-London activation and ‘In For Good’ principle. It was suggested that the GLA should ensure there is a comprehensive review of the impact this has had on councils, including possibility that funding will need to be diverted from other rough</p>	<p>GLA</p>

	<p>sleeping related activities. LO confirmed that a full review of the impact of the new protocol would be conducted at the end of the winter and that further news on the proposed SWEF fund, to support councils in adhering to the new guidance, will follow soon.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Winter Campaign</p> <p>Debra Levison (DL) updated the group on the Mayor’s upcoming winter rough sleeping campaign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The campaign will launch in late November and run until the end of March. • There will be a three-pronged message on how Londoners can contribute – donate, contact Streetlink and volunteer. Like last year, donations can be made online through the GoFundMe internet page and for this winter, the GLA have collaborated with TAP London to roll-out contactless donation points in shops and other outlets around London. • Donations go directly to the London Homelessness Charities Group and must be spent on frontline services to prevent or tackle rough sleeping in London. This group is coordinated by St Mungo’s, with the criteria for membership including that one of the organisation’s primary activities must be to prevent or tackle rough sleeping in London. <p>The group agreed that raising the public’s awareness of how they can support efforts to reduce rough sleeping is a helpful message. It was suggested that imagery and messaging in the campaign should focus on the positive impact that their actions, and the work of homelessness charities, can have.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Aims of the NNSR taskforce in 2019/20</p> <p>David Eastwood (DE) presented proposals for new areas of focus for the taskforce’s sub-groups. Full details can be found in the appended document.</p> <p>The group discussed the proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was queried whether the proposed new youth sub-group should be a priority, as London still had proportionally very low numbers of young people sleeping rough. DE explained that it is believed that the genuine numbers of young people sleeping rough may be significantly different to numbers recorded and this is one area it is proposed that the group could examine. • An additional sub-group focusing on prevention was suggested, with the possibility of incorporating young people as one of the focus areas for this group. A review of the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act on rough sleeping in London could also be coordinated by this sub-group. • There was support for non-UK nationals sub-group, given that this group makes up such a large proportion of people sleeping rough in London, and the solutions for this group are desperately needed. • It was flagged that perhaps the support sub-group should first focus on mental health and then later on substance misuse, to maximise the number of key relevant people who could attend - although there was recognition that these two issues often overlap. • The groups should be coordinated with the working groups of the Government’s Rough Sleeping Advisory panel, to ensure they are effectively feeding into this work. 	

	<p>DE will finalise proposals for the new sub-group structure based on the group’s feedback.</p> <p>DE facilitated a discussion on possible areas of focus for forthcoming meetings. The following suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for non-UK nationals; • Concerns over enforcement action; • Comparing approaches in London and elsewhere in the country; and • Influencing Government policy. 	<p>GLA</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Any other business</p>	
	<p>None.</p> <p>Next meeting 16 May 2019 9-11am, Meeting Room F, 169 Union Street</p>	