

Leaders' Committee

Enhanced sub-regional working re: Item no: 6 Rough Sleeping

Report by: Elly Shepherd **Job title:** Housing and Planning Strategic Lead

Date: 8 February 2022

Contact Officer: Elly Shepherd

Telephone: 020 7934 9813 **Email:** eloise.shepherd@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Summary: This report outlines a proposal for an enhanced role for London Councils within the new London rough sleeping programme. This will see the recruitment of sub-regional rough sleeping co-ordinators sitting alongside the existing Rough Sleeping Programme Director role within Housing and Planning, with posts funded by DLUHC under the next phase of the Rough Sleepers Initiative 2022-25 (RSI22-25) via an arrangement with the GLA.

It will also see London Councils take on responsibility for grant-funding sub-regional immigration advice services for rough sleepers across four of London's sub-regions, again utilising RSI22-25 funds.

Recommendations: Members are asked to:

- Note and approve the suggested way forward.

Enhanced sub-regional working re: Rough Sleeping

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines a proposal for an enhanced role for London Councils within the new London rough sleeping programme. This will see the recruitment of sub-regional rough sleeping co-ordinators sitting alongside the existing Rough Sleeping Programme Director role within Housing and Planning, with posts funded by DLUHC under the next phase of the Rough Sleepers Initiative 2022-25 (RSI22-25) via an arrangement with the GLA. It will also see London Councils take on responsibility for grant-funding sub-regional immigration advice services for rough sleepers across four of London's sub-regions, again utilising RSI22-25 funds.
- 1.2 The new shared governance arrangements (signed off in October 2021) have given London Councils a key role within London's rough sleeping programme – overseeing various programmes, leading on overall programme management, and taking a co-ordinating role in the partnership to ensure effective collaboration and improved outcomes for boroughs.
- 1.3 DLUHC is seeking to improve sub-regional working on rough sleeping to provide increased opportunities for local authorities to collaborate, share services and better respond to the mobility of the client group by working across borough boundaries. While there are mature and effective sub-regional activities already happening in west and north London (led by existing sub-regional co-ordinators), the ambition is to do more and to have these same roles and activities happening in all sub-regions.
- 1.4 The housing sub-regions that are being used for rough sleeping broadly match those that are used by integrated care systems, with the exception that Westminster sits within the North sub-region for housing rather than the North West as for health. Given the existing rough sleeping services already commissioned and working across north London, it has not been considered desirable for the footprint to change at this stage so as to completely match ICS

footprints. For the purposes of this proposal, the sub-regions referenced are as follows:

- South West: Richmond, Wandsworth, Croydon, Sutton, Merton, Kingston
- South East: Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley, Bromley
- North West: Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Hillingdon, Harrow, Hounslow
- North East: City of London, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Havering, Barking & Dagenham
- North Central: Westminster, Camden, Islington, Enfield, Barnet, Haringey

1.5 The shared view of all partners is that some solutions for rough sleepers are better delivered at a local borough level, some make sense at a pan-London level, but others can most effectively be delivered at a sub-regional level. The belief of most local authorities, DLUHC and the GLA and is that improving sub-regional working would be beneficial.

1.6 The proposed changes will contribute to London Councils' shared ambitions, providing:

London's Voice: this proposal gives us the opportunity to act strategically and influentially in London regarding an issue on which we need to work jointly with the GLA, the government and other cities facing similar challenges. It puts us in a position to be able to lobby for the support and funding that local authorities need in tackling this issue and provides us with a key opportunity to shape the London narrative in relation to rough sleeping.

Value Proposition for Boroughs: supporting the development of sub-regional strategy and service development provides boroughs with opportunities to innovate, share best practice and solutions, and achieve economies of scale and improved service effectiveness.

1.7 It is an opportunity to build more effective partnerships, argue for more funding for London (which has 45% of the national rough sleeping population) and use our status as a trusted partner for government and other stakeholders to shape

an important agenda. An enhanced leadership role in respect of the London Rough Sleeping programme also gives us more opportunities to speak up for London's rough sleepers, for London's boroughs and for London Councils.

2. Specific proposals

2.1 The proposal is for GLA and London Councils to make shared bids under the Rough Sleepers Initiative 22-25 funding programme for the following:

- A continuation of the Rough Sleeping Programme Director role to the end of March 2025
- A new Policy Officer role supporting the programme funded to the end of March 2025
- 2 to 3 new sub-regional co-ordinator roles funded to the end of March 2025 – the exact number is to be defined once boroughs are clear they wish London Councils to take on the hosting rather than host them within boroughs, as is the case in west and north London
- Funding to cover the award of grants for 4 new sub-regional immigration advice services for rough sleepers in the amount of around £1m-£2m. With north London bidding for and commissioning its own service.

2.2 To meet with DLUHCs funding requirements, the GLA will submit RSI22-25 bids on behalf of the partnership and will transfer the funds to London Councils under a grant agreement.

2.3 The deadline for bids to go into DLUHC is 25th February, with decisions expected sometime in early April. If successful, we will be expected to award funds to immigration advice providers and have staff in post by 1 July 2022.

2.4 This enhancement to London Council's role in respect of rough sleeping is a welcome vote of confidence in the work we have done, and the role we have taken, since the start of the pandemic.

2.5 In accordance with London Councils Financial Regulations, all externally funded projects greater than £250,000 must be agreed by London Councils Leaders' Committee (Appendix 8, 2.8). A member decision is therefore required that London Councils can receive this grant funding from the GLA which will be detailed in a separate report to Leaders.

3.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to approve the proposal for London Councils to work closely with local authorities, the GLA and DLUHC to take on this enhanced role in respect of delivery of the ending rough sleeping programme work in London and the recommendation for the Grants Committee to undertake governance of the immigration advice services within its existing priority work to combat homelessness.

Financial Implications

The Acting Director of Corporate Resources reports that any successful Rough Sleepers Initiative 22-25 bids which result in additional resources, as detailed in paragraph 2, will require a specific grant agreement with the GLA to cover expenditure incurred on a full cost recovery basis, subject to the approval of Leaders' Committee.

Legal Implications

The form of grant agreement intended to be used for the money to pass through from the Greater London Authority to London Councils has already been cleared by the Chief Solicitor at the Comptroller & City Solicitor's Office.

Equalities Implications

Rough sleeping is linked to poor health outcomes and health inequity, and the average age of death for a rough sleeper is much lower than for a housed person. Any action to improve the effectiveness of interventions intended to tackle rough sleeping are likely to have a positive impact on reducing health inequalities.

Non-UK rough sleepers – often with limited entitlements to housing and support – are a particularly vulnerable subset of the overall rough sleeping population. The development of new sub-regional services changes to governance will support a continued, joined up focus on reducing rough sleeping within this group.