



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

Title: **Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date: **Monday 7th November, 2016**

Time: **7.00 pm**

Venue: **Rooms 5, 6 & 7 - 17th Floor, Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP**

Members: **Councillors:**

Brian Connell (Chairman)	Jacqui Wilkinson
Peter Freeman	Adam Hug
Richard Holloway	Barbara Arzymanow
Gotz Mohindra	Tim Roca

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda

Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception at City Hall from 6.30pm. If you have a disability and require any special assistance please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.



An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Reuben Segal; Senior Committee and Governance Officer.

**Tel: 020 7641 3160; email: rsegal@westminster.gov.uk
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions they should contact the Director of Law in advance of the meeting please.

AGENDA

PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)

1. MEMBERSHIP

The Director of Law to report any changes to the membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations by Members and Officers of the existence and nature of any personal or prejudicial interests in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To sign the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record of proceedings.

(Pages 1 - 8)

4. WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER

(Pages 9 - 18)

5. UPDATE FROM CABINET MEMBERS

(Pages 19 - 32)

An update from the Cabinet Members on key areas within their portfolios are attached.

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services will be in attendance to answer questions from the Committee.

6. DRAFT ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2017-2020

(Pages 33 - 98)

Report of the Executive Director of Growth, Planning and Housing and the Director of Policy, Performance & Communications

Petra Salva, Director of Services, (Rough Sleeper, Migrants & Ex-Offender Services) St Mungos, has been invited to the meeting as an expert witness to assist the committee in its deliberations.

7. RE-COMMISSIONING THE HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE

**(Pages 99 -
108)**

Report of the Executive Director of Growth, Planning and
Housing

**Charlie Parker
Chief Executive
28 October 2016**

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CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Monday 12th September, 2016**, Rooms 5, 6 & 7 - 17th Floor, Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6 QP.

Members Present: Councillors Brian Connell (Chairman), Barbara Arzymanow, Peter Freeman, Gotz Mohindra, Jacqui Wilkinson, Adam Hug and Roca

Also Present: Steve Mair (City Treasurer), Barbara Brownlee (Director of Housing & Regeneration), Jonathan Cowie (CEO, CityWest Homes), Martin Edgerton (Executive Director of Customer Services, CityWest Homes), Tracey Lees (CEO of Wandle), Tara Murphy (Scrutiny Officer) and Reuben Segal (Committee & Governance Services)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Richard Holloway

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 There were no changes to the membership.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations made.

3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of proceedings.

4 UPDATE ON WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTIONS

4.1 The committee was informed that the item on Housing Options Service Transformation (re-procurement) would be brought forward from the January to November meeting.

4.2 **RESOLVED:** That the responses to actions and recommendations as set out in the tracker be noted.

5 UPDATE FROM CABINET MEMBERS

- 5.1 The Committee received written updates from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services and the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business & Economic Development on the key aspects of their portfolios.
- 5.2 In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business & Economic Development, Barbara Brownlee, Director of Housing & Regeneration, responded to questions on the following issues:

Delivering Church Street Renewal

- 5.2.1 The Director of Housing & Regeneration was asked a number of questions relating to Church Street Renewal including the number of years that it would take to deliver the programme, the dependency of renewal on the delivery of affordable housing at West End Green, and the timing of this, and the progress of work at Lisson Arches.

The Committee was informed that the renewal of Church Street was one of the largest regeneration projects in London involving a dozen mixed use sites incorporating commercial and residential buildings, a rail station, tube station and new park. While a fixed end date for its completion has not been set it would be at least 10 years before the main elements are finished. Ms Brownlee stated that the main emphasis at present was progressing the master-planning and procurement exercise. The outcome of these would be reported early in the New Year where there would be clear briefs for each of the specific sites.

With regards to the affordable housing accommodation at West End Green, the Director of Housing & Regeneration advised that the Council was pleased by the 127 affordable housing units obtained as part of the planning consent. The units are of a good size and tenure and equate to 22% of the entire scheme. Demolition of the Church Street estate cannot begin until the decant has concluded. She explained that the Council was still in discussions with the housing provider as to when this would occur. While this would be partly dependent on the delivery of the units at West End Green other aspects of the renewal such as the redevelopments at Cosway Street and Ashbridge Street are able to proceed as these sites are already empty. In response to questions about the timing of delivery of the affordable housing at West End Green the director clarified that the planning consent makes clear that occupation of the market units cannot be occupied until the affording housing element has been delivered.

With respect to Lisson Arches, Ms Brownlee advised that the work on site to divert services and create a development platform is proving extremely complex. The record drawings for service locations and for the foundation of adjacent structures are not wholly accurate or complete. The project team are in constant dialogue with FM Conway and the utility companies seeking to expedite progress. Weekly meetings are held between the project lead, herself and the contractor. The expectation at present is that the programme deadline will be met.

Ebury Bridge

- 5.2.2 The Director of Housing & Regeneration was asked why the housing block at Ebury Bridge had not been demolished when it has been empty for well over a year. Ms Brownlee explained that the building was not empty but was being used for temporary accommodation purposes. The Council had acquired the first of two Soho housing blocks while negotiations were well advanced on the second block. When these have been acquired the tenants at Ebury Bridge will be decanted along with those in Edgson House after which the buildings will be demolished. The aim was for the latter to occur in 6 to 8 months. Residents had been informed about the plans at meetings and through adverts placed in writing on the estates.

Update on the Housing & Planning Act

- 5.2.3 In response to a question on when regulations to support the implementation of the act were expected to be published, the Director of Housing & Regeneration advised that the Council had received little information other than the regulations relating to the high-value void levy were likely to come forward in the second quarter of 2017. Regulations on Pay to Stay were expected in the autumn but will now not likely come forward until next year.

Homelessness Legislation

- 5.2.4 The Committee asked Ms Brownlee about the possible impact of the Bill for Westminster and for details of the Council's position to the legislation including any lobbying activities undertaken. Ms Brownlee explained that the bill places a greater emphasis on homelessness prevention and extends a duty to provide accommodation to the single homeless. She advised that the Council was not in opposition to the bill and supported broadening the prevention offer to help the homeless single. However, it did have concerns about two technical issues. These related to the possible removal of a local link which could result in the Council having a duty to house for 56 nights anyone in a priority category. This would have significant financial consequences to the authority both in terms of the cost of providing accommodation and of sourcing sufficient places as London attracts most single homeless people. She stated that there were presently good pathways to support single, vulnerable people but that the bill as presently drafted would lead to others being provided with less adequate and less well supported housing. She considered it to be a blunt response to a complex problem. The Council was part of a pan London group lobbying on the bill.

Broadband

- 5.2.5 Jonathan Cowie, CEO, CityWest Homes (CWH) provided an update on the provision of broadband on CWH estates. He stated that CWH was in the process of opening up the Council's estates to the provision of 1GB fast broadband. This was to be provided by three non-BT providers. The rollout to the Churchill Estate, which would be the first of three estates to benefit from the scheme, was expected to be approved next week.

Finance

- 5.3 At the chairman's request Steve Mair, City Treasurer, provided the committee with an overview of the budget setting cycle.

5.4 **RESOLVED:** That the updates from Cabinet Members be noted.

5.5 **ACTION:**

1. Provide the committee with an update on proposals for Berwick Street Market.
2. The Committee would like an update on which areas of Westminster would be the first to benefit from the rollout of the new Fibre to the Premises broadband. Members also want to know whether there are any residual planning issues that may affect the rollout.
3. With the joint Westminster/Camden BID by the Fitzrovia Partnership in mind, the Committee asked about the possibility of joint BIDs with other local authorities on the boundary with Westminster.

(Actions for: Councillor Daniel Astaire, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business & Economic Development)

4. The Committee would like a note on the rollout of 1GB faster broadband on CityWest Homes Estates including whether there will be affordable packages for those on low incomes.

(Action for: Jonathan Cowie, CEO, CityWest Homes)

6 UPDATE FROM CITYWEST HOMES ON THEIR TRANSFORMATION PLAN

- 6.1 The Committee received a Powerpoint presentation from Jonathan Cowie, Chief Executive, CityWest Homes (CWH) and Martin Edgerton, Executive Director, Customer Services, CityWest Homes on CityWest Homes Transformation Plan.

The presentation set out:

- the wider context for CWH transformation agenda
- some of the key challenges faced
- the outcomes the transformation will deliver
- the vision, how the new approach will work
- a high level timeline for delivery

- 6.2 The committee heard from witness Tracey Lees, CEO of Wandle and former CEO of Barnet Homes, who had been invited to the meeting to provide a peer perspective on the proposals. Ms Lees provided a brief summary of her career background. She advised that she had worked for more than 30 years in social housing for a number of local authorities, registered providers and ALMOS including the City Council where she had been an operations manager for 10 years prior to the authority establishing CWH. She was currently the CEO of Wandle, a Housing Association operating in South London.

- 6.3 At the chairman's invitation Ms Lees provided her initial thoughts on the proposed transformation plan. She considered that some aspects of the plan that was being proposed, is addressing issues that felt quite dated. She expressed surprise that Westminster still had such a high provision of local estate offices which were expensive to maintain. She explained that in Barnet, outside the core estates where residential blocks were scattered it did not make sense to have local offices. She considered that CWH should review the on-going provision of local estate offices. No other local authority that she was aware of had as extensive an offer. She stated that while it was important to have some core standards of service, beyond this CWH could and should differentiate service levels according to different occupier requirements. She stated that a high level of leaseholders who have not been Council tenants do not have the same requirements as social housing tenants. She suggested that providing the same services differently could enable the Council to redirect the money saved elsewhere such as to providing health or employment projects. She was also surprised that there had not previously been a higher demand for self-service from residents.
- 6.4 The Committee then considered the proposals and in the ensuing discussion raised a range of questions with the officers present.
- 6.5 Members reported that some residents express surprise at the satisfaction levels reported as these do not correlate with their experience of services. The committee asked how CWH would tackle such perceptions. Mr Cowie stated that while 20% of residents were highly satisfied with CWH it would be complacent to consider this to be good. He stated that to change perceptions it would be important to understand the 80% of resident's who didn't respond and address any systemic root cause of dissatisfaction. He advised that CWH was about to receive the results of satisfaction metrics from 5000 residents using a new approach via the Institute of Customer Services. This would provide CWH with a better understanding of what residents think and would help the organisation to realign culturally. This would also allow Westminster and CWH to compare satisfaction directly with the best public and private sector organisations in the UK. Mr Edgerton advised that the transformation programme included plans for more real-time analysis and information on performance where residents would be asked for feedback which should assist CWH to obtain a clearer picture of how the organisation is performing.
- 6.6 The Committee asked about the way that complaints would be dealt with as part of the new vision. Mr Cowie stated that although statistically CWH received a low number of complaints he recognised that it had been poor at handling those that it did receive. He advised that in the last 4 months satisfaction with complaint handling had improved from 63% to 77%. He stated that he wished to see this figure rise to above 50%. One measure of how well complaints were dealt with was whether many were escalated to the ombudsman. He advised that the cause of complaints around major works often related to the performance of contractors. He recognised that the contracting out of major works had in the past had not always been well managed. The contracts often included a high degree of subcontracting and contractors did not necessarily have the same strategic alignment as CWH

and the City Council. He advised that over the next 12 months £500 million of contracts were to be tendered and the aim would be to address such issues. Part of this would include more joined up working and rationalising the level of subcontracting on major works.

6.7 Officers were referred to the fact that while CWH provide some comparatively high service standards these came at a high cost. The Committee asked about the balance between having such standards and the requirement to provide value for money. Mr Cowie advised that CWH was refreshing and transforming how it engages with residents through the new resident engagement boards. CWH would establish what is most important to residents and then look at how these can be prioritised. This would help establish minimum standards of service and help to drive more consistency. Mr Edgerton commented that during engagement on service standards residents had been pragmatic and accepted reasonable trade-offs. Any money saved could then be re-channelled into other priorities.

6.8 Members expressed concern about the possible closure of estate offices which would likely meet with negative reactions from local residents. Mr Cowie recognised that there will always be some people who will need to have direct contact with the organisation. He explained that the transformation programme would review how a local presence can be provided while providing value for money. He advised that CWH are developing the options for review by November alongside work on how it can better use its spaces and opportunities to develop hubs. Concurrently, the City Council is undertaking a review of its operational property portfolio of over 300 buildings and CWH is participating in this to see where opportunities may exist. Any plans to re-shape how the services are to be delivered via the estate offices would involve an extensive review with resident's via the new resident council and area panels.

RESOLVED:

1. The committee considered that the transformation programme had on the whole a great deal to recommend itself. Members noted that the CWH Executive Team was keen to modernise services, deliver greater efficiency and reduce cost. It considered the programme of change to be ambitious providing more performance measurements on issues of importance to tenants and tailoring services to customer requirements while reducing costs to leaseholders and delivering more housing.
2. The committee was keen to see greater joint working with Westminster services as well as other public sector bodies within the target operating model, not just a in relation to infrastructure, but also procurement in order to take advantage of the increased benefits provided by scale.
3. With regards to potential risks, the committee noted the intention to further develop its digital and self-service offer. It considered that CWH needs to consider how it will provide on-going assistance to those residents who rely on direct access to services and who will be unable to interact with the organisation digitally. It also considered that as CWH does not have a

baseline for all data there is a risk that some measurements will not be included as part of the target operating model.

7 TREASURY OPPORTUNITIES

- 7.1 The Committee received a report that provided a background to the Council's current treasury portfolio and set out details of initiatives being considered with the potential to optimise the return on cash investments including a number of projects being evaluated.
- 7.2 The City Treasurer was asked what mechanisms are used to identify opportunities. He advised that the Council benchmarks its activities and performance against other local authorities. Additionally, the finance team liaises with its peers and professional contacts to discuss different income opportunities.
- 7.3 The Committee asked whether consideration has been given to investing in buy to let such as providing student accommodation which would complement Westminster's objective of being a leader in education. The City Treasurer was also asked for an update on the Council's thinking of using the pension fund to support regeneration with profits being re-paid to the fund. The City Treasurer advised in relation to the former that the Council had agreed when setting the Council tax budget in March to invest £25 million with the potential to rise to £50 million in property to generate income. The Council had signed its first contract relating to this a few weeks ago. He advised in relation to The Pension Fund and the City Council fund that officers are continuing to explore options.
- 7.4 Members provided mixed views on the risk appetite for the Treasury portfolio.

7.5 RESOLVED:

1. The committee noted the initiatives set out in the report which were being evaluated alongside other options. It supported the objective of optimising the return on investments subject to maintaining a cautious approach to risk based on a principle of being risk aware rather than risk averse.
2. The committee requested that the City Treasurer provide i) more detailed information on the Treasury opportunities being progressed by other local authorities, ii) the mechanisms employed by the Council for sourcing ideas and iii) how options being developed link to other Council strategies when the Draft Treasury Management Plan for 2017-18 is submitted to the committee for consideration in January.

8 WESTMINSTER RESIDENTS PANEL

- 8.1 Councillor Hug, who had requested that the item was added to the committee's agenda, addressed members on his concerns relating to the proposed withdrawal of funding to the Westminster Residents Panel. He explained that the panel is an independent city wide forum of Council and registered provider residents that discuss best practice and issues of common

concern and support residents associations. A significant proportion of the money provided by the Council to the Panel paid for a part-time administrator as well as general office requirements. The withdrawal of funding would result in loss of the administrative post which would affect the panel's ability to continue to operate.

8.2 Councillor Hug advised that he had been in correspondence with officers on the matter for a number of weeks. His intention for adding the item to the committee's agenda was to have an opportunity to debate the matter and put questions to the Cabinet Member. In the Cabinet Member's absence he agreed to follow up his concerns outside of the meeting.

8.3 In response to questions the Director of Housing & Regeneration, advised that while the Council has an obligation to provide housing for those in housing need and to provide this across the Borough there is no statutory or regulatory requirement to have a panel of this kind. She undertook to continue liaising with Councillor Hug on the matter and keep him informed of any further developments.

The Meeting ended at 9.17 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____



City of Westminster

Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Monday 7 th November 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Update on work programme and action tracker
Report of:	Julia Corkey-Director of Policy, Performance and Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for Choice / Heritage / Aspiration
Report Author and Contact Details:	Tara Murphy x2894 tmurphy@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the work programme for committee to note and also an update on the action tracker.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

Committee is asked to note the work programme at Appendix 1 and the action tracker at Appendix 2.

3. Background

The work programme is as noted by Committee at its last meeting in September except that the Treasury Half Year Review paper, which was originally scheduled for the November meeting, will now come to the January meeting.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers please contact Tara Murphy x2894**

tmurphy@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1-Work Programme

Appendix 2- Action Tracker

Work Programme



Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Committee

ROUND THREE – 7 November 2016 Main Theme – Finance and Corporate Services

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by:
Cabinet Member Q&A Finance & Corporate Services	A Q&A session with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Customer Services	Cllr Mitchell
Rough Sleeping Strategy	To review the responses from the public consultation.	Jennifer Travassos Richard Cressey
Housing Options Service Transformation: Re-procurement	To examine the HOS re-procurement before the new contract begins in November 2017.	Vikki Everett Rebecca Ireland Barbara Brownlee

ROUND FOUR – 9 January 2017 Main Theme – Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by:
Cabinet Member Q&A Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development	A Q&A session with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development	Cllr Astaire
Draft Treasury Management Strategy 2017/18	A statutory assessment of the draft treasury management strategy prior to submission to Council for approval.	Steve Mair
Treasury Performance Half Year Statutory Review	A statutory review of treasury performance.	Steve Mair
HRA Business Plan	To review and comment upon the annual 30 year HRA business plan for 2017-18. To note the direction of travel and capital investment priorities.	Barbara Brownlee

Work Programme



Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Committee

ROUND FIVE – 6 March 2017 Main Theme – Finance and Corporate Services

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by:
Cabinet Member Q&A Finance & Corporate Services	A Q&A session with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Customer Services	Cllr Mitchell
Estate Regeneration Programme Review	A review of the Ebury Bridge Project/Church Street Regeneration Programme	Barbara Brownlee

ROUND SIX – 10 April 2017 Main Theme – Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by:
Cabinet Member Q&A Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development	A Q&A session with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development	Cllr Astaire
MSP Review – 1 year on	To analyse the progress of the re-launched Managed Services Programme.	John Quinn
IT/ O365 – review 1 year on	How well supporting agile working is going – change security/privacy; how to enable more customer-centric approach:	John Quinn

Other Committee Events & Task Groups

Briefings	Reason	Date
Budget T/G	Standing task Group to consider the budget of Council	Jan/Feb 2017
City Hall T/G	Taskgroup to analyse the City Hall Refurbishment Programme	June 2016 -

Work Programme

Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Committee



Items for consideration at a later date

Affordable Housing Supply	A review of the delivery of affordable housing supply including social housing and intermediate housing.	Will be placed on June 2017 agenda to allow 1 year review (Barbara Brownlee)
Supply and Allocation of Social Housing	To scrutinise the supply and allocation of social housing in the City of Westminster.	Will be placed on June 2017 agenda to allow 1 year review (Barbara Brownlee)
Rationalisation of the Operational Property Portfolio	To analyse the strategy, which is due to be completed in August. This will follow up on the discussion at the meeting in June 2016.	Removed from November 2016 meeting Guy Slocombe
Major Projects	To update the Committee on Major Projects taking place in the borough.	Removed from November 2016 meeting Stuart Reilly

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ROUND SIX (13 APRIL 16)

Agenda Item	Action and responsible officer	Update
Item 7 – Total Facilities Management: Performance and Contract Support	<p>Provide the Committee with a summary of the results of the annual staff survey to determine whether the perception of the service delivery resonates with members' own experiences.</p> <p>Provide the committee with details of what the additional cost would be to the City Council of paying service provider staff the London Living Wage. (Action for: Debbie Morris, Head of Facilities Management, Tri-Borough)</p>	

ROUND ONE (13 JUNE 16)

Agenda Item	Action and responsible officer	Update
Item 4 – Work Programme	Provide a briefing note updating the committee on government policy changes to the Private Rented Sector once published. (Action for: Andrew Barry-Pursell)	This will be included in the briefing note on changes being brought in through the Housing and Planning Act in the Autumn
Item 8 – Treasury Outturn for 2015/16	Provide the committee with details of how the Council's Treasury Outturn compares with that of comparable local authorities. (Action for: George Bruce, Tri-Borough Director of Treasury and Pensions)	The information will be provided as part of the Treasury Performance Half Year Statutory Review at the meeting in November

ROUND TWO (12 SEPTEMBER 16)

Agenda Item	Action and responsible officer	Update
Item 5 – Update from cabinet Members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the committee with an update on proposals for Berwick Street Market. 2. The Committee would like an update on which areas of Westminster would be the first to 	

	<p>benefit from the rollout of the new Fibre to the Premises broadband. Members also want to know whether there are any residual planning issues that may affect the rollout.</p> <p>3. With the joint Westminster/Camden BID by the Fitzrovia Partnership in mind, the Committee asked about the possibility of joint BIDs with other local authorities on the boundary with Westminster.</p> <p>(Actions for: Councillor Daniel Astaire, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business & Economic Development)</p> <p>4. The Committee would like a note on the rollout of 1GB faster broadband on CityWest Homes Estates including whether there will be affordable packages for those on low incomes.</p> <p>(Action for: Jonathan Cowie, CEO, CityWest Homes)</p>	
<p>Item 7 – Treasury Opportunities</p>	<p>RESOLVED</p> <p>1. The committee noted the initiatives set out in the report which were being evaluated alongside other options. It supported the objective of optimising the return on investments subject to maintaining a cautious approach to risk based on a principle of being risk aware rather than risk averse.</p> <p>2. The committee requested that the City Treasurer provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) more detailed information on the Treasury opportunities being progressed by other local authorities, ii) the mechanisms employed by the Council for sourcing 	<p>To be included in the Draft Treasury Management Plan for 2017-18 for review by committee at January meeting.</p>

Action Tracker

City
for All

Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Committee

ideas and
iii) how options being developed
link to other Council
strategies when the Draft
Treasury Management Plan
for 2017-18 is submitted to
the committee for
consideration in January.

(Steve Mair, City Treasurer)

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City of Westminster

Housing, Finance & Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee Briefing

Date: 7th November 2016

Author: Cllr Tim Mitchell

Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Finance & Corporate Services

Please contact: Madeleine Hale x 2621
mhale@westminster.gov.uk

1. Finance

1.1. Business Rates

The City Council continues to lobby the Government for resolution of the anomalies within the existing Business Rate Retention Scheme, including the resolution of the Rateable Value appeals issue, which results in the Council losing £6m per annum due to a factor which is completely outside of our control (appeals are the responsibility of the Valuation Office). This lobbying is proving to be successful in that the Government has recognised the issue and is working on a solution. The issue is now whether the solution can be implemented in time for the 2017/18 financial year.

The Valuation Office recently published its draft 2017 Business Rate (NNDR) Valuation List following their Revaluation of the city's rateable values (rateable values are based on rental values). Whilst the Council's overall total rateable value increased by 25%, there were some much larger percentage increases for individual properties in the borough, particularly retail properties in the West End. However, the levels of increase were generally expected due to the known increases in rental values since the last Revaluation. However what was not expected was the Government's proposals for phasing in the rateable value increases. The Government's recently published consultation paper on their proposed NNDR Transitional scheme has a preferred option limiting increases to 45% in Year 1 of the scheme (2017/18) for "Large" properties (properties with a rateable value of at least £100,000). This is compared with the current Transitional scheme for the 2010 Revaluation, which limited increases for Large properties to only 12.5%. The City Council has sent a response to the consultation requesting that the Government amends its preferred option to a fairer, more sustainable phasing in arrangement. Similar responses to the consultation have been made by local Business

Improvement Districts (BIDs) and other business organisations. The Government will consider the consultation responses and put forward regulations to implement a Transitional scheme in the next couple of months.

1.2 No PO NO Pay and Sundry Debtor Recovery

As part of the programme of continuous improvement and the efficiencies designed into the BT managed service programme's Agresso system, one of the next steps in implementing "business as usual" for the Accounts Payable module is to make use of Purchase Orders (POs) as the principle means of requisitioning supplies and paying invoices. This promotes the automated matching of compliant invoices to purchase orders and facilitates the prompt processing and payment of invoices.

No PO No Pay is being phased in incrementally. The strategy commenced in August with the announcement to service areas and direct letters to circa 5000 suppliers of the requirements for POs and compliant invoices. Further reminders were issued to staff in early October.

We have reached stage two of the implementation plan, which is to return non-compliant invoices dated later than 17th October to service areas and to notify suppliers of the same. We aim for full implementation of "No PO, No Pay" by the 1st December but will kept under review subject to satisfactory technical performance of Agresso and associated interfaces.

There has been a programme of debt management in place in the last period encompassing issuing Adult Social Care statements and prioritised debt recovery led by Finance Managers working with service areas. Invoices have continued to be raised promptly and monies received are being allocated by BT and the Council. To enhance this, the Council will now be undertaking its own automated recovery of sundry debt with BT being responsible for running the automated and scheduled batch programmes on Agresso and the subsequent printing and mailing of the recovery documentation commencing in a similar time scale. The Council will be responsible all other elements of the recovery process, including the handling of payment and service enquiries and the updating of sundry debtor accounts.

A rolling plan was developed and the first batch of statements were issued for Building Control on 12th October and covered £260k of unpaid invoices. Positive responses are being received from debtors. Due to further requirements by BT, the remaining schedule was re-planned and was due to recommence on 24th October. A training programme is being delivered concurrently prior to each service area's go-live date on the debt management strategy and the additional functionality granted within Agresso to support debt management

1.3 Budget

Work continues on the budget preparation, both capital and revenue, will be reported to Policy and Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council in the new year.

1.4 Accounts

In line with the Council's enhanced quality in the preparation of its accounts, accounts for Q2 are currently in the process of preparation. This process reduces the year end risk, identifies opportunities at an earlier stage and frees up financial management expertise to support services at an earlier time in 2017/18 than would otherwise have been the case. External audit are being routinely and regularly updated on progress and will be beginning their preliminary audit work Q3 accounts

1.5 Budget Monitoring

The budget continues to be actively monitored with as previously reported an underspend forecast for the full financial year

1.6 Council Tax and NNDR Collection

Council Tax and Business Rate (NNDR) collection is going well, with both due to meet or exceed last year's collection figures (last year's collection figures were the best previously recorded for the City Council).

1.7 Discretionary Housing Payment Fund

The Council has received Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) funding for 2016/17 of £2.67M from central Government. This funding assists Housing Benefit claimants who have a shortfall between the Housing Benefit they receive and their rent. The Council is currently projected to spend the Government allocation by year end. However, estimating spend accurately is problematic because demand is expected to increase significantly when the Benefit Cap is reduced. The reduction to the Benefit Cap is the latest change under the central Government's Welfare Reform Programme. The reduction will affect benefit claimants in Westminster in two tranches in November 2016 and January 2017. It is currently anticipated that the Government's 2016/17 funding, together with an element of the additional £1.1m Council funding agreed as part of the 2016/17 Council Tax Setting report, should be sufficient to meet this increased demand. The Council's DHP funding for 2017/18 is due to be announced by the Government in by February 2017 at the latest.

2 Corporate Property

2.1 City Hall

Planning permission has been granted for the refurbishment of City Hall with the programme of works due to begin in June 2017. The property team has identified two sites to which the Council will temporarily relocate, 5 Strand and Portland House in Victoria. Leases for both are now complete. Procurement of a main contractor is progressing positively and the outcome will be known in time for the next briefing. In the meantime a Policy & Scrutiny task group is receiving progress updates and providing challenge sessions to the project team.

2.2 Operational Property Strategy

Phase one of the analysis of the corporate portfolio has identified a number of asset management opportunities within the existing operational portfolio that have the potential to deliver over £4m comprising a mixture of savings and new income

streams over a 5 year timeline. It identifies that c. £3.5m can be delivered over the next 3 years. This primarily focuses on better asset management of existing assets, the surrender of surplus, costly leases and the more efficient use of accommodation across the portfolio.

Simultaneously Corporate Property will be conducting a workshop with services to begin developing a new operational property strategy which aims to further reduce the corporate portfolio through co-locating services and the creation of hubs.

3 Corporate Services

3.1 People Services

3.1.1 The Talent Strategy has been agreed and plans are in place to begin to deliver this in Q3 with senior leadership successors. The strategy seeks to maximise the potential of current staff and attract and retain the best talent. It will build pipelines from Internship, Graduate and Apprenticeship entry through to top leadership roles to ensure that the Council has a modern and effective workforce to support its Routemap to Success.

The Corporate Induction event was held on the 6th October with circa 40 new employees. It was a high energy half day event with a focus on the City for All Vision, our Values, Collaboration and Networking as well as an introduction to our services.

Positive feedback was received with over 80% of attendees saying the event was Excellent or Very Good (average score 5.2 out of 6). 4 new graduates have begun their induction programme; they are meeting with senior stakeholders and have been introduced to their first 6 month placement which has started.

To complement this, we have, in conjunction with staff and managers, developed a recruitment brand. This will enable us to attract the best talent now and in the future. The brand will help showcase the story of working at WCC for potential candidates and will also boost internal staff engagement. The brand launch has begun and People Services will continue to engage with managers to help them understand its impact over the coming months.

People Services will continue to work internally within the business and with contractors and partners to find further opportunities for recruiting and placing Apprentices. People Services are continuing to work with the specialist Workplace Co-ordinator from the Cross River Partnership to identify suitable opportunities for their clients.

3.1.2 Engagement

The overall response rate across the three councils for the Your Voice survey was 58% and WCC got an impressive 68 per cent response rate.

The headline results from the survey are now in and generally the results for Westminster City Council are positive. Managers across the council will be completing their Your Voice Action plans by December 2016. People Services will work across the council to support follow up actions as appropriate.

In March 2016 the council was awarded the London Healthy Workplace Charter at commitment level. In this first stage, the verifiers were particularly impressed with senior management support and leadership in health and well-being, our partnership approach working with other London boroughs; and the range of encouraging good behaviours to improve employee health. The council is now working towards accreditation at the Achievement level by March 2017.

3.1.3 Working the Westminster Way

In May we started The “Working the Westminster Way” programme. To date we have seen 535 delegates through the 2 day programme. The programme is due to be completed by the end of March 2017. The training target is 1200 so 665 staff are due to attend. In Q2 the final cohort of senior leaders are attending the academy programme with 115 having a development plan in place.

People Services hosted the Pensions Annual General Meeting which took place on 19th September. It was an opportunity for staff to find out how the pension fund is run and to share any feedback. The meeting was chaired by Cllr Suhail Rahuja and representatives from our pension providers, actuaries and fund investments were all in attendance.

3.2 Procurement

3.2.1 People Development

Procurement Services has been awarded Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS) accreditation. Westminster City Council are one of only a few local authorities who have achieved the award having undertaken a formal review of the organisation, strategy, people, processes, systems and performance management. Such recognition will ensure Procurement Services are position to support the Council in achieving its long-term strategic plan.

3.2.2 Operating Model

The Shared Services Board approved revised Tri-Borough Procurement Assurance for Adult Social Care (ASC) & Children’s Services (CHS). Both ASC and CHS will adopt the Westminster Category Management approach and as such toolkits have been updated to accommodate changes. Training has been scheduled for December 2016 for both Services and the Tri-Borough Procurement Code will be updated and the new approach will be implemented from 1st January 2017.

3.2.3 City Hall Refurbishment

The City Hall refurbishment tender evaluation has been completed and a preferred bidder has been identified.

3.2.4 Technology Development

Improved workflows are now live within capitalEsourcing which will simplify the sourcing process as well as driving best practise, ASC and CHS will also be adopting this approach.

A robust savings tracking process with associated governance has now been agreed with finance, next step is to build this within capitalEsourcing and implement.

Contract scorecards are being built within capitalEsourcing using the Ricoh Print and Document Management Contract as a pilot.

3.3 ICT

3.3.1 Phase 2 of the ICT restructure

The new structure for Phase 2 went live on 3rd October and provides a strategic integrated team to deliver the objectives of the Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster, whilst also preserving shared “Tri-borough” services. Ed Garcez, the current Chief Information Officer (CIO) leaves the Council to take up a new role with Camden/Islington/Haringey on 4th November. Ben Goward, current Head of Digital, has been appointed as interim Bi-borough CIO for Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster until a permanent CIO is recruited.

3.3.2 City Hall refurbishment programme

The IT team is preparing IT services in the temporary “decant” locations, ready for occupation from March/April 2017. Meanwhile a major programme of legacy server decommissioning, covering IT equipment on the Mezzanine Floor City Hall and in Basement Computer Rooms at Lisson Grove is progressing for completion ahead of City Hall exit. This will improve the stability and security compliance of essential Council services and complete WCCs journey to “cloud computing”. IT specifications are also now being agreed for the refurbished City Hall, which is intended to support new agile ways of working.

3.3.3 Digital Workforce

Enhancements to the End User computing platform for WCC staff continue, following rollout of Office 365 earlier in the year. These include rollout of latest browser and Office software, upgrades to WiFi and additional training on the new tools now available. Later this year a refresh of remaining legacy end user computing equipment will be undertaken, for laptops and PCs over 5 years old.

3.3.4 Customer Digital

The shared IT service has been working with the Policy Performance and Communications Digital team to conclude procurement of the common enabling Web/CRM platform which will be utilised by WCC and (subject to agreement) RBKC, to support future service transformations. In October we have also introduced a new Web search platform which makes it easier for Council customers to find the services and information they require. Work continues to complete the new shared Geographical Information (GIS) System which will be launched in November.

3.4. Legal

Since the establishment of a single legal service we have made significant strides towards achieving our key deliverables and fulfilling our target operating model which will deliver significant savings to the council.

Legal Services have reduced duplication in the provision of advice for clients and we have established a clear single point of contact for all clients to obtain legal advice. To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the service, we have settled co-location to a single site and embedded new teams, reporting lines and operational practices. We have continued to in-source work to assist in delivering savings and work with external clients to build further income with exciting potential.

High levels of client satisfaction have been achieved and we are developing a new recording and reporting mechanism to ensure this continues as the service matures.

We are now focusing on agile working and maximising use of Office 365 tools. As we actively move towards electronic working and away from paper based processes, we are simplifying and standardising processes, especially the back office functions (business support, financial processes and reporting etc).

3.5 Managed Services

3.5.1

Progress is being made with the work packages that have been created supporting the service solution. Key risks remain as identified in the last report to the Committee. The most significant is still the capacity of resource from both parties to deliver the remaining activity to the current plan.

3.5.2 Payroll and Pensions

A payroll and pensions calendar of key events has been created and payslip changes covering a multitude of variables e.g. season ticket loans and pension adjustments have been successfully completed. Completion of the pension reports has been reforecast from 30th September to 31st October. Deloitte have undertaken a review of BT's payroll system and processes at their request. The findings of this review are currently being reviewed within BT.

3.5.3 HR

The organisation structure project to fill data gaps and create additional mandatory fields is close to completion. New alerts and more effective reporting have been put in place to ensure that fixed term contracts can be more efficiently managed. The establishment report for schools has been released to self-service.

3.5.4 Governance

Good progress has been made with the service improvement plan. The first performance improvement plans have been agreed. Event driven customer satisfaction surveys have been launched and Knowledge Base functioning has been signed off.

BT have in place a quality plan which includes a review of all Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) and Local Work Instructions (LWI's), resolution of all gaps and sign off by the councils.

3.5.6 BT Shared Service Centre (BT SSC) operational performance

The incident team continues to focus on resolving new incidents as well as backlog reduction. The major areas for incident reporting continue to be supplier payments, payroll and applications (including access and system performance).

The current payroll accuracy figure for September is 98.6%. This figure does not include errors due to Pensions Reconciliation/Payroll Audit (including sickness/maternity/season ticket loans/unpaid leave etc.).

Agresso has been implemented and there is a great deal of functionality which is working. Suppliers are being paid; the post to post hierarchy is largely correct; and employees are able to self-serve in many areas of their work.

Key risks remain unchanged, recent reported staff turnover at the BT Shared Service is a concern and BT have been asked to report on the measures being taken or proposed to ensure a stable and competent workforce.

27th October 2016

Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee Briefing

Committee date:	7th November 2016
Author:	Cllr Daniel Astaire
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development
Please contact:	Madeleine Hale x 2621 mhale@westminster.gov.uk

Please find below an update on key areas of activity from the Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development portfolio since the committee last met.

Housing

1. Church Street Renewal

Work on developing the Green Spine continues. Wider consultation on the master planning exercise will take place in November and December through a range of events.

The Regeneration Base at 99 Church Street is operating well and residents drop in regularly to talk to the team.

The Luton Street development is due to be submitted for planning in the New Year and the developer is meeting regularly with the residents' group to consider their input to the design process.

2. Ebury Bridge

Dialogue with residents in the delivery of new and improved homes at Ebury Bridge continues through on-site meetings; drop in sessions and a regular newsletter. The first of the Soho Housing blocks has been acquired; negotiations are well advanced

on the second block, completion is expected within the calendar year and rehousing residents is currently underway.

3. Housing Zone

The Business Impact Analysis for Lisson Arches will be completed by the end of November. Discussions continue on securing further investment in the Housing Zone from the GLA.

4. Tollgate Gardens

Affinity Sutton has taken possession of the Tollgate Gardens site. Hoardings and safe access routes are in place for the residents of Tollgate House and demolition works began in the week of 20th October.

5. Infill programme

To date we have received planning permission for 8 new homes, with a forecast of 16 new homes for this financial year. These are proposed to be delivered within the financial year 2017/18, along with planning permissions for the new build development sites. We are looking at ways of accelerating this programme, and expect it to deliver over 100 units, maximising the delivery of affordable housing on our own land.

6. Affordable Housing

18 new affordable homes have been delivered by housing association partners since April 2016, with a further 175 new affordable homes expected to be delivered by partners during the remainder of 2016/2017. These will be provided on mainly new build s106 sites.

In addition the Council has completed the purchase of 113 two and three bed properties on the open market to provide affordable housing for homeless households. Following completion of works, 88 of these homes are now let or awaiting letting. The Council has agreed terms on a further 22 purchases.

6. Housing and Planning Act 2016

We are still awaiting regulations to implement the key changes brought in by the 2016 Act, such as sale of high value voids and the pay-to-stay provisions. On starter homes, there are indications that ministers are considering broadening the definition so that instead of an exclusive focus on homes for ownership, it also covers rent-to-buy products. The Mayor of London is developing a product of this kind and we are in discussions with the Greater London Authority about this and the potential synergies between it and the Westminster Accelerator that we are delivering in

partnership with Dolphin Living.

7. Homelessness Reduction Bill

The Homelessness Reduction Bill, which is being taken forward as a Private Members' Bill by Bob Blackman MP, is scheduled to have its second reading debate on 28th October. In advance of this Mr Blackman has produced a revised Bill, which takes account of recommendations made by the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny of the Bill as well as discussions with the Local Government Association and others in the sector. While the Bill continues to place heavy emphasis on preventing homelessness, it no longer proposes an emergency 56 day duty to accommodate anyone with nowhere safe to stay.

Proposals to change the 'local connection' test (from the current requirement to live in the area for 6 of the last 12 months or 3 out of the past 5 years to one for someone to have lived or worked in an area for 6 months without a break, or because of family associations or 'special circumstances') have also been dropped. Communities Secretary Sajid Javid MP announced on 24th October that the Government is officially endorsing the Bill and will be supporting it through the Private Members' Bill process. The Policy and Scrutiny Committee will be kept updated on the Bill's progress.

8. Annual HRA business planning cycle - A robust collaborative business planning process underpinning the indicative investment programme is well underway. It is based upon:

- robust assumptions on key variables
- sound contingency levels for development schemes
- close collaboration and partnership of key officers from all areas of the council and CWH

9. CityWest Homes (CWH)

Performance - CWH continued to perform well in Quarter 2 against its management agreement targets.

Board Recruitment - Two resident board members and an independent member are due to step down this year and recruitment is underway. An excellent response has been received to a letter from the chairman sent to all tenants and resident lessees inviting them to consider board membership with over 50 applications received. One Resident Board member will be appointed to join the board immediately, with a second to join in Spring 2017.

Service Transformation – Work continues on the development of a new service delivery target operating model, supported by a digital programme.

Development of a multichannel contact centre is on track with a call handling pilot work now being rolled out across all areas.

The model includes a review of the current use of the offices. Where customer visitor levels are low and maintaining an office is unsustainable, replacement with other service delivery options, including home visits for vulnerable residents and using other community facilities is being explored.

CWH is working on a joint procurement exercise with the Council to purchase CRM software which the Council aims to pilot in Q4, with the ambition of improving service delivery and giving greater access through direct self-service.

To support the creation of the new target operating model, CWH is working towards creating a new legal subsidiary. The target date for the creation of the new subsidiary is January 2017 with a start date from April 2017.

Letting of new repairs and major works contracts is on track for phased implementation over the spring and summer of 2017.

10. Rough Sleeping

A Rough Sleeping Pathway and Engagement Officer has joined the Rough Sleeping Team at the council. The officer will work in partnership with City West Homes to reduce rough sleeping across the borough and within the estates. They are organising a CWH estate based street count to engage both residents and CWH staff in addressing rough sleeping in their communities. Moving forward, new protocols are being established to report the issue and to support staff to make informal interventions.

We have experienced a significant rise in the number of service users who are using 'Spice'. At present, approximately 35% are using this substance and the impacts we have experienced are cardiac arrests, violence and aggression alongside seizures. A meeting was held recently to establish a consistent point of contact with the police for Hostels, increasing information sharing and creating a joined up approach on 'Spice' usage and dealing. The meeting also established a rough sleeping ASB case worker as a single point of contact for daytime activity around anti-social behaviour. We also established an alert mechanism to ensure both hostels and police are aware of when a bad batch of 'spice' is circulating.

Economic Development and Growth

11. Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

The Economy Team has entered a busy period of preparation for Heart of London Business Alliance's (HOLBA) renewal ballots for the occupier BIDs covering the areas of Piccadilly, St James's, Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus. Officers across Economy, City Management and Communities, Business Rates, Elections, Legal, and Policy are currently reviewing the HOLBA 2017-22 Business Proposal along with the two inserts which outline the BID Levy Rules and Financial Management. The ballots will be run during February and March 2017 with the results being announced on the 24th March 2017.

12. Westminster Business Unit

The Business Unit continues to progress well since its inception. In excess of 184 enquiries have been handled to date with a resolution rate of 86%. Most common enquiries relate to Business Advice/ Support, Licensing, Business Rates, Investment and Procurement. The unit is currently on track to achieve their annual target of 300 enquiries.

13. Westminster Enterprise Week (WEW) 2016

The final details are being pulled together for Westminster Enterprise Week 2016 which will run from 14th – 20th November. WEW 2016 aims to:

- Work in partnership with around 60 business and enterprise support volunteers to deliver around 30 dedicated enterprise activities, events or workshops
- Provide a total of 1,500 enterprise learning hours to engage and inspire 1,000 young people in enterprise education and connect them to the world class enterprise landscape on their doorstep
- Strengthen ties with important sector clusters in order to help grow and develop local talent

The event programme has been improved further from an already highly successful inaugural year. The programme's capacity offers far in excess of the guided learning hours target for enterprise education/activities.

14. Employment

499 residents have been supported into employment so far this financial year. Of those, 355 were previously long term unemployed, claiming benefits for 12 months or more. Employment Outcomes for long term unemployed residents in 2016/17 are projected to increase by 158% compared with 2015/16. In the 5 year period Feb 2011 to Feb 2016 long term unemployment in Westminster fell by 22%. Compared

to 378 Local Authority districts in England, Wales and Scotland, Westminster achieved the 8th highest fall in the numbers of Long Term Unemployed.

On-going reductions in long term unemployment reflect the Economy Team's shift in focus towards supporting long term unemployed residents. All employment and skills services funded by the Council now prioritise groups further away from work.

15. Broadband

In the last month BT Openreach have announced the upgrade of Moorgate cabinets 7, 8 and 9. This ensures a further 360 residents have access to fibre broadband. To date the total number of premises being served is 4,030. This expansion is part of the BT Openreach commitment to make fibre broadband available to an additional 38,874 homes and businesses in Westminster following a council campaign last year.

The council has also supported new entrants into the market and G.Network has now connected 3 streets in Westminster with fibre broadband which serves up to 138 businesses. They have now identified 82 streets within the City of Westminster which they would like to lay fibre on by December 2017.

16. Markets

The deadline for submitting PQQ's closed on the 30th September. The council received 7 submissions from operators who are interested in managing the market. The evaluation of these submissions is currently taking place with the view of shortlisting operators by Friday 28th October.

The shortlisted operators will then be invited to tender and propose their visions for Berwick Street Market based on a brief that has been developed with key stakeholders. As part of this process they will be encouraged to meet with stakeholders from the local community to help them create the vision. The traders will also be introduced to the operators to explore future potential for trading on Berwick Street Market.

Following the invitation to tender stage the council will be in a position to award the contract by January which enables the operator a mobilisation period so they can launch the market in Spring 2017.

27th October 2016



City of Westminster

Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	7 November 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Draft Rough Sleeping Strategy 2017 -20
Report of:	Julia Corkey, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications Ed Watson, Executive Director of Growth, Planning and Housing
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Public Protection Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for All – This report is genuinely cross cutting as the draft strategy seek to promote aspiration, choice and heritage
Report Authors and Contact Details:	Sarah Monaghan x2286 smonaghan@westminster.gov.uk Richard Cressey x3403 rcressey@westminster.gov.uk

1 Executive Summary

This report outlines the proposed priorities for the draft Rough Sleeping Strategy 2017-20 (enclosed) and headline findings from the public consultation, which closes on 4 November 2016.

As public consultation closes one working day before the meeting of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee, and after the deadline for publication of papers, this report contains information gathered up to the 26 October 2016. A presentation will be given at the Committee meeting containing any substantial information received after this date.

2 Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

The Housing, Finance and Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- Reflect on the consultation and the views provided by residents, businesses, voluntary sector organisations and others engaged with.

- Comment on the draft strategy in light of consultation feedback gathered, and identify areas for further development ahead of final publication of the revised strategy early in 2017.

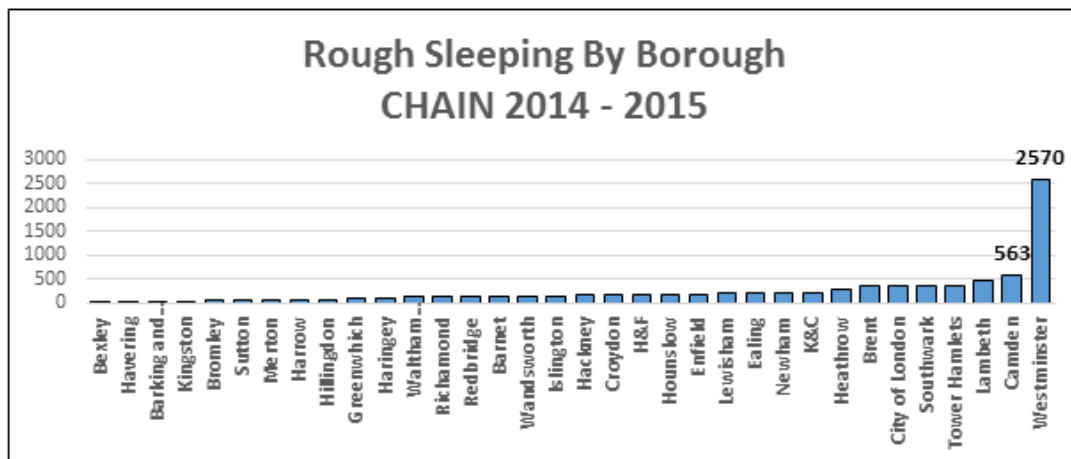
3 Background

3.1 The current Rough Sleeping Strategy is due to expire this year and a new draft strategy has been developed for the next three years. Although there is no statutory requirement to have a strategy, the issue is particularly acute in Westminster given that we have more rough sleepers here than anywhere else in the country. A strategy helps demonstrate Westminster’s commitment to tackling rough sleeping but also to inform and educate the public and partners about this complex issue.

3.2 The draft strategy has been developed over the past year in conjunction with the Cabinet Members for Public Protection and Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development. It has also been reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Board, EMT and other stakeholders. The draft is a product of cross-departmental working, with involvement from colleagues across a number of directorates as well as engagement with key partners such as the Police, the Home Office and the Central London CCG.

3.3 The draft strategy is based on a robust evidence base, which was developed in early 2016 and is attached in full at Appendix 3¹. This shows us that Westminster has, by far and away, the greatest number of rough sleepers in London (figure 1).

Figure 1



¹ The statistics in the evidence base may differ slightly from those used in the draft strategy because the data picture change rapidly and these documents were produced at different times. The overall trends and lessons from the data have not changed however.

3.4 The evidence also shows us that, whilst the most entrenched rough sleepers tend to be UK or Irish nationals, there are more people on Westminster’s streets from Central and Eastern Europe than anywhere else (figure 2). This is further illustrated by the fact that foreign national rough sleepers are increasing, whilst the number of UK and Irish nationals remains broadly stable (figure 3).

Figure 2

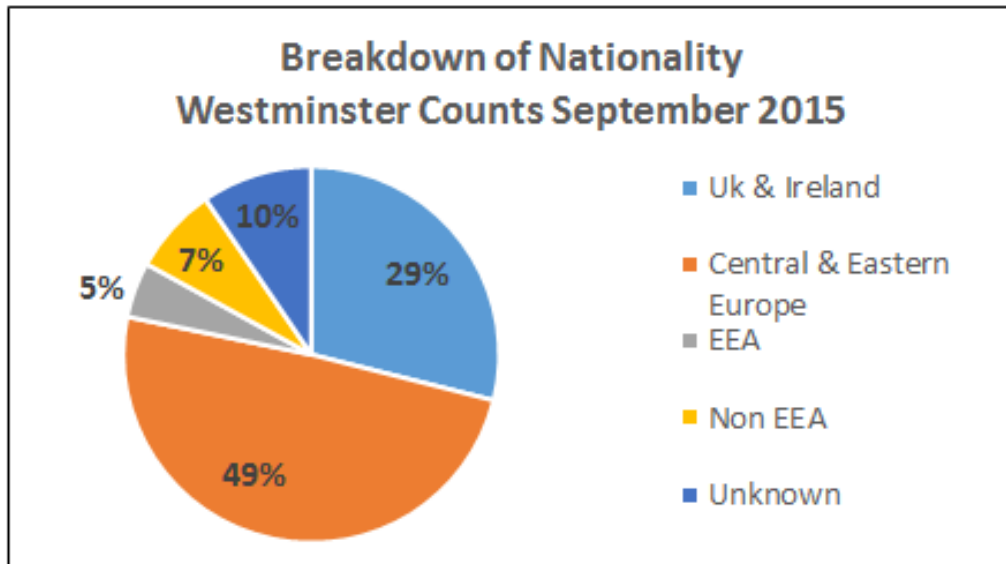
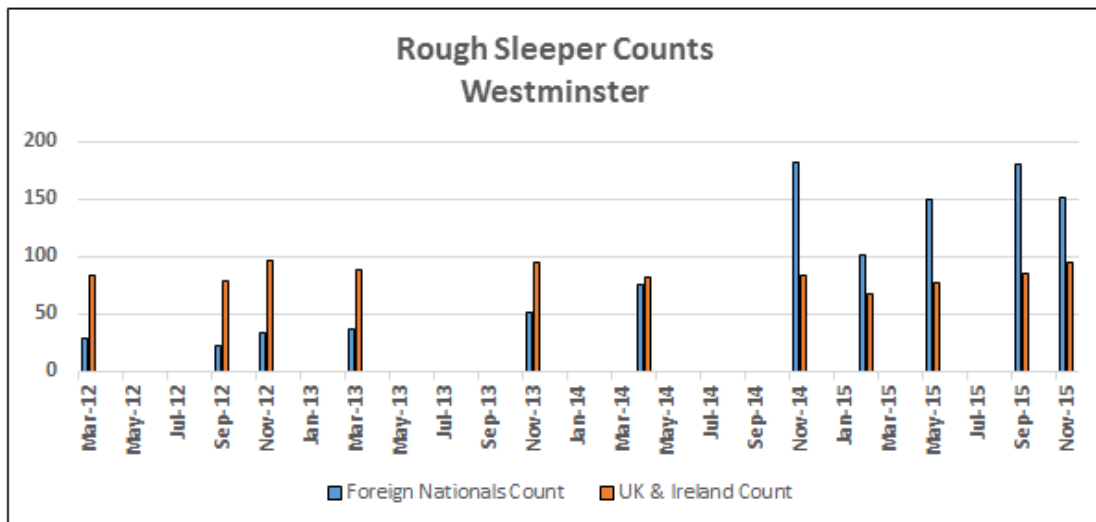
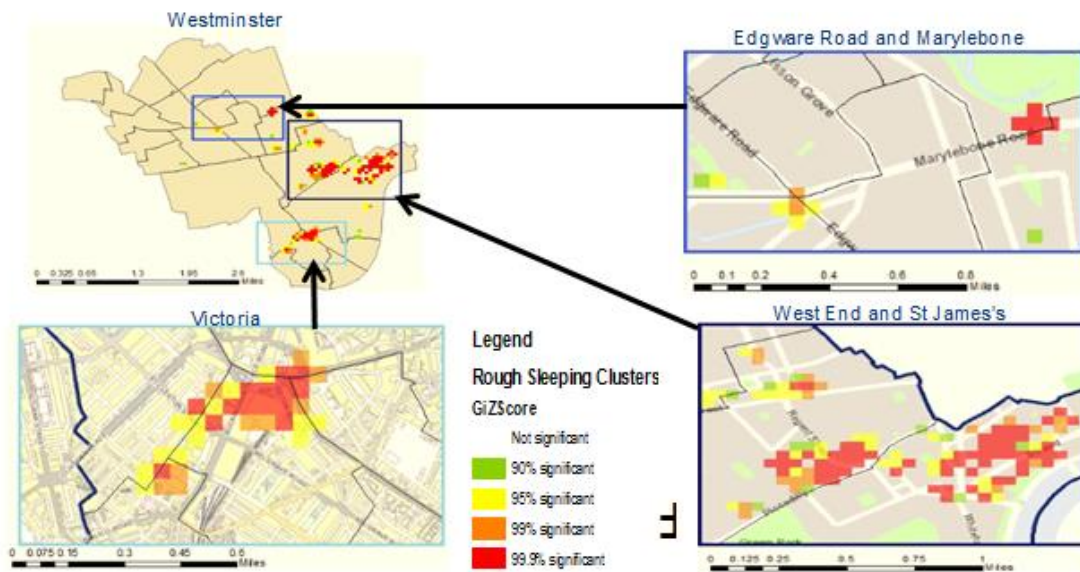


Figure 3



3.5 Perhaps unsurprisingly, the hotspots for rough sleeping tend to be in heart of Westminster. This mirrors the London-wide dynamic that causes Westminster to have the highest numbers in London (see figure 4).

Figure 4



3.6 The strategy builds on the achievements and best practice that are already in place. At its centre is recognition that rough sleeping is dangerous and damaging to those concerned, and that it has wider impacts on community wellbeing. It therefore focuses on further reducing rough sleeping by prioritising action to prevent even more people from ending up on the streets, but also doing all we can to help those who do arrive there off the streets as quickly as possible, helping them to turn their lives around.

3.7 The overarching ambition in the strategy is to deliver a significant reduction in rough sleeping and address the harm it brings to individuals and communities in Westminster. The overall approach is characterised by innovation and partnership working, with a focus on the council taking a strategic leadership role across the city to focus efforts on supporting our objectives. We also want to continue to develop our services to be even more focused on outcomes and added value for rough sleepers and will look at models such as payment by results (where this is appropriate) to stimulate innovation and to encourage efficiency and value for money.

4 Draft Strategy and Priorities

4.1 The strategy identifies three key priorities to reduce rough sleeping:

1. Where it is possible for us to do so, taking more action to prevent people from rough sleeping in the first place and providing a rapid response when people do end up on the streets.
2. Supporting people who are sleeping rough to rebuild their lives – and to stay off the street.
3. Tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping the city safe.

- 4.2 These priorities are supported by specific objectives, concrete commitments and measurable targets that we believe will build on our current practice and help to realise our vision.
- 4.3 With the consultation just completed, the Committee are invited to consider the main priorities and proposals put forward in the draft strategy and give views on what is being suggested and any areas where we could do more or are not included. Any comments will be taken into account as the strategy is refined over the next few months, before a final strategy is submitted.
- 4.4 The full draft strategy is attached as Appendix 1 to this document and a 2 page summary is included at appendix 2.
- 4.5 Although it is proposed that the council's general approach to tackling rough sleeping remains the broadly same, there are a number of important changes proposed that the Committee may want to consider, for example:
- The introduction of a more personalised approach that flows from the first point of contact through to support/treatment and, where necessary, enforcement action. This will ensure that public services always put support first and are aware of an individual's situation whenever they engage.
 - Taking more action to address the health needs of rough sleepers, with a particular focus on mental health issues and substance misuse. We will look at new ways to help people engage with services and raise awareness of the devastating impact of new drugs such as 'spice' on users and those trying to help amongst partners and the wider public.
 - Engaging more directly with charitable organisations that offer support to those on the streets, but are not commissioned by the council, to ensure that support offered is responsibly meeting the needs of individuals, linked in with wider support services and limits the impact on the surrounding communities.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The consultation period ran from 26 October until 4 November. During the consultation period, officers attended a number of events such as Open Forum Public Meeting on 6 October, promoted the consultation through existing partnership meetings such as the West End Partnership and spent time talking to businesses in hotspot areas such as Victoria and the Strand.
- 5.2 Links to the draft strategy and the summary document on the Open Forum page were sent directly to a range of stakeholders including: Councillors, council staff, CCGs, local MPs, BIDs, business representatives, commissioned and non-commissioned voluntary sector organisations, the GLA, DCLG, the Home Office, the Police, City West Homes and resident and neighbourhood groups. Hard copies were also sent to all libraries in the city.
- 5.3 All stakeholders were directed to the dedicated questionnaire on the Open Forum website² to respond, but were also able to respond to the consultation

² <https://openforum.westminster.gov.uk/draft-rough-sleeping-strategy1>

face to face by way of the above meetings, by post or electronically via a dedicated email address. The Open Forum questionnaire asked a number of specific questions about the proposals and consultees were invited to answer these or comment on any other aspects of the strategy or on areas they think should also be included. All consultation documentation was available online via the council website and Open Forum, and in hard copy as appropriate and required. We also made use of social media to promote the consultation.

- 5.4 Officers also took a tailored approach to consulting with service users and worked with support workers to ask specific questions in an appropriate format.

6 Consultation Responses

- 6.1 As the consultation closed just one working day before the meeting of the Committee, this report provides analysis of the headline responses up until 26 October 2016. A presentation on the overall headline findings will be made to the Committee on the day of the meeting and a written analysis of responses will be circulated to Members after the meeting.

Headline findings

- 6.2 As of 26 October 2016, there were 86 responses to the online consultation questionnaire, one written response and a further 11 responses from service users who are being supported through our rough sleeping pathway. Although not receiving comprehensive support from all respondents, there was general support for the priorities and supporting objectives set out in the draft Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 6.3 Of those who responded on Open Forum, 71% of respondents were residents and 25% were workers in the area. At this stage, we had not received large numbers of responses from voluntary sector partners or businesses due to fact that these organisations tend to respond in the latter part of the consultation process. An update will be provided at the meeting.
- 6.4 93% of respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree that the three priorities were the right ones. 6% of respondents either strongly disagreed or tended to disagree. So far, overall, there are clear differences in respondents' attitudes towards the proposed approach, with some respondents focussing on the negative impacts of rough sleeping in their areas and ideas to take a more robust approach to incentivise people to rebuild their lives. Other respondents thought that more emphasis should be put on meeting people's immediate needs with a view to allowing them to change their lives if they wish to.

- 6.5 Other consistent themes from the responses so far include: some respondents thought that the strategy should include and engage with the causes of rough sleeping, although it was also recognised that many of these causes were not in the direct control of the council. There was also recognition that responses needed to ensure that the problem was not shifted elsewhere and the need for a joined-up response across the country. Some respondents thought the strategy should directly address wider issues such as anti-social behaviour and housing provision.
- 6.6 On the first priority to prevent rough sleeping, 90% of respondents agreed the draft objectives were the right ones. A key theme from the responses to this question was that although prevention was a good aim, in some cases it would be difficult to deliver and ultimately, responses needed to focus on what happens when people do end up on the streets.
- 6.7 On the second priority to help people rebuild their lives, 95% of respondents agreed that the draft objectives were the right ones. Some responses queried how this was achievable given the range of different outcomes that are possible for different individuals and the need to be clear about the difference in outcomes for non-UK nationals. Whilst some respondents supported the ambition, they queried whether there were consequences for the individual where support is refused. Responses also highlighted the need for better co-ordination across the whole range of support services in the city.
- 6.8 On the third priority to tackle anti-social behaviour and keep the city safe, 87% of respondents agreed with the draft objectives. A key theme from responses to this priority was concerns around begging and the need to have a co-ordinated response across the city towards it. This was a recurrent theme in many responses. A small number of respondents expressed strong concerns about enforcement.
- 6.9 There was a mixed response towards the proposed targets, with the majority (77%) of respondents stating they thought they were achievable. Fewer people however, thought the targets were ambitious enough – 60% of respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree they were ambitious enough, whereas 21% of people did not think they were ambitious enough. The views of the sector will be particularly important to shed further light on the relevance of these targets.
- 6.10 When asked about what others in the city could do to support the strategy (focussing on working with businesses, charities and other public sector agencies), most respondents agreed that working together was important in delivering the strategy. Some agreed with the proposed approach that rough sleeping should be a priority when asking businesses, voluntarily, to make positive impacts in Westminster, where they provide us with services and suggested different ways in which this could happen. Others said it was up to businesses to decide whether they get involved and the council should not encourage businesses to support various charities or causes. There were many positive comments about the work charities are already carrying out. Many respondents highlighted that it was important for the council to inform

organisations about how to practically deal with the issues arising from rough sleeping and where they could get more information when issues arise.

6.11 Overall, the feedback from the consultation raised the issue about communicating with and educating the public about these issues. It has been a consistent theme in the consultation responses that many people are not aware of the extent of the support available for rough sleepers. Many respondents highlighted that there should be more accessible and responsive ways to report rough sleepers and that the council should provide more information and support about our services to businesses and organisations affected by rough sleeping in the city.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Sarah Monaghan x2286 smonaghan@westminster.gov.uk or Richard Cressey rcressey@westminster.gov.uk x3403

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Draft rough sleeping strategy

Appendix 2 – 2 page draft strategy summary

Appendix 3 – Evidence base – February 2016

Appendix 4 – WHAT (Westminster Homeless Action Together) week: learning, findings and next steps: executive summary.

DRAFT

ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY



Introduction

We are uncompromising in our view that, with the right solutions and bold actions, rough sleeping is not inevitable. As the most visible and damaging form of homelessness, it is something that a leading, twenty-first century global city simply cannot ignore. We are equally firm in our belief – supported by experience – that, with the right support, it is possible for everyone to turn their lives around, even when they face multiple, deep-seated problems.

The stark fact is that rough sleeping is harmful and dangerous, and the longer someone stays on the streets, the more harmful and dangerous it becomes. The best thing we can do is to prevent rough sleeping in the first place. Where this is not possible, people must be supported away from the streets as soon as possible, before things deteriorate, and given help to resolve the problems that put them there in the first place and rebuild their lives.

Rough sleeping, and behaviours that are often associated with it, such as begging, drug activity and anti-social behaviour more widely, also have broader impacts on the residents, workers, businesses, visitors and communities we serve. They place further demands on local public services which are felt more acutely in Westminster than anywhere else in the country.

For all these reasons, reducing rough sleeping and its impacts on communities remains an absolute priority for Westminster City Council. Our focus is to offer people ways off the streets that ensure they do not return and to reduce the impact rough sleeping can have on all Westminster's people and places.

Our last rough sleeping strategy covered the period 2013-2016. Over this time we worked closely with our partners to deliver some lasting achievements and meaningful improvements to the lives of rough sleepers. The number of people rough sleeping across the country has increased in recent years and, despite our successes locally, remained consistently high in Westminster. One of the biggest changes since our last strategy was launched has been the significant increase in non-UK/Irish nationals sleeping rough here.

It is clear that there are a large number of often complex and interdependent factors that contribute to the number of people rough sleeping at any one time. This draft strategy explains how the council intends to respond to these challenges over the next three years (from 2017-20). It builds on our achievements and shows how we will continue to improve what we do to prevent and tackle rough sleeping. Running through this document is the importance of the council's leadership role in bringing together all those with a part to play in Westminster. As important will be using our track record of innovation to support action with other London boroughs, the Mayor and, in some cases, other cities across the UK.

But we cannot do this alone. We must work closely with our partners and the public as a whole to develop, coordinate and implement solutions that are focussed at getting people off the streets. This is an issue that many people care about deeply and is one we can all do something to help tackle. This strategy is intended to help catalyse the kind of cross-community action which is vital to the outcomes we all want to see – an end to rough sleeping and the harm it brings to those caught up in it.

The current picture of rough sleeping in Westminster

➤ Definition of rough sleeping

In this strategy, “rough sleeping” is used to refer to people who are sleeping or bedding down in the open air; in places such as streets, doorways, parks, benches or bus shelters; or even in sheds, car parks or tents. While rough sleeping is far from the only form of homelessness, it is its most visible and striking manifestation.

This strategy also includes former rough sleepers who are currently in our supported accommodation, being helped to stay off the streets and rebuild their lives.

➤ What we know about rough sleeping in Westminster

Rough sleeping is a growing problem nationally, but is particularly acute in Westminster, which has by far the highest number of rough sleepers in the country. A key reason for this is our unique location – in the heart of the capital city and the centre of its transport network (including the major international hub at Victoria Coach Station). It is a place that brings together businesses and visitors from all over London, the UK and the rest of the world, to an extent simply not seen anywhere else in the country.

To help us monitor the issue and enable us to plan our response, we use the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers in London. We also undertake quarterly street counts to get an accurate snapshot of who is rough sleeping in Westminster on a given night.

According to CHAIN, 2,857 people were seen rough sleeping in Westminster during 2015-16. This is 35% of all rough sleepers in London and more than the next seven ranking boroughs combined¹. While we can help the majority of these off the streets quickly, our street counts suggest that, on any one night, there are around 300 people sleeping rough on Westminster’s streets.

This document uses a number of technical terms which are defined in a full glossary at the end.

➤ Who is sleeping rough in Westminster?

The range of complex causes of rough sleeping in Westminster has increased significantly since we published our last strategy. This means it is important to understand the broad groups we deal with – while always recognising that every individual’s circumstances and needs differ. Based on available intelligence and our work with individuals on the street, we can identify three broad groups currently on Westminster’s streets:

1. **Rough sleepers with complex support needs and entrenched problems.** People in this group have a high level (and often number) of issues, such as substance misuse and mental or physical health issues. They are sometimes referred to as ‘core’ rough sleepers and are predominantly from the UK or Ireland.

¹ Camden 641; Lambeth 445; City of London; 440; Tower Hamlets 395; Southwark 372; Ealing 287; Newham 260

2. **Rough sleepers who are unable or unwilling to secure accommodation in the UK.** People in this group tend not to have the same kind of complex support needs as those in the first group. The majority of this group may not be eligible for housing benefit or have No Recourse to Public Funds status and, as a result, they have limited access to our supported accommodation. They may work, sometimes cash in hand, and may have access to accommodation in other countries.
3. **Rough sleepers with limited support needs, and who are regularly involved with begging and other low level crime.** This group varies significantly in size, depending on the time of year. It is characterised by a lack of willingness to engage with any services and by involvement with anti-social behaviour and crime.

➤ **Non-UK/Irish (I) Nationals**

Since November 2014, the number of non-UK/I nationals has exceeded that of UK/I nationals² and can now make up to 65% of rough sleepers in Westminster on any given night. The proportion of non-UK/I nationals has increased dramatically and has risen by over 400% since March 2012, according to our last street count in May 2016.

Non-UK/I nationals sleeping rough in Westminster raise distinctive issues that mean we have to respond in different ways. Many tend to sleep rough for different reasons to rough sleepers from the UK or Ireland and generally have much lower levels of support needs. Many individuals actively refuse any offers of support away from the streets and are often sleeping rough in London temporarily while seeking (frequently informal) work. A large proportion of this group are not entitled to housing benefit or have “No Recourse to Public Funds” status which limits their access to supported accommodation.

This situation raises challenging issues. We believe that Westminster’s streets are not an appropriate accommodation option for people who come here without a realistic plan for where they are going to sleep.

We make every effort to ensure that support is available to non-UK/I nationals who are vulnerable and require an intervention (see page 14). For those who do require some support, we have a tailored approach and work in partnership with services such as Routes Home (a service provided by the GLA to support non-UK nationals sleeping rough). For those who don’t require support and who are abusing EU free movement rights, we will continue to work in partnership with the Home Office Immigration Enforcement to reconnect them to their home country.

We do not know what effect the result of the recent referendum on the UK’s continued membership of the EU might have on this situation. In particular, we do not know what the future rules will be regarding the movement of EU nationals.

Whatever the final outcome, there are limits to what a local authority can realistically do to help many non-UK/I nationals who do sleep rough here.

² Irish nationals have a special status in UK law, which affects their rights across a number of areas, including eligibility for British citizenship and certain welfare benefits. As a result, they have more advantageous rights than other EU/EEA nationals in some areas. See [House of Commons Library](#).

What we want to achieve

Our overarching ambition is to deliver a significant reduction in rough sleeping and address the harm it brings to individuals and communities in Westminster. Experience shows us that with the right solutions and bold actions, rough sleeping is not inevitable. It also shows the need to recognise that many of the factors driving rough sleeping are entrenched, enduring and are unlikely to be fully resolved before the end of this strategy in 2020. That said, as this strategy explains, there is much we can do to reduce rough sleeping and its impacts, working with others to identify and tackle some of the underlying causes.

We have three strategic priorities to help deliver our ambition:

- 1. Where it is possible for us to do so, taking more action to prevent people from rough sleeping in the first place and providing a rapid response when people do end up on the streets.**
- 2. Supporting people who are sleeping rough to rebuild their lives – and to stay off the street.**
- 3. Tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping the city safe.**

How we are going to deliver

Our overall approach is characterised by innovation and partnership working. As the funding pressures on local authorities continue, we will need to make the resources we do have stretch much further than they have in the past. This means being more innovative about how we deliver against our priorities and help people rebuild their lives. It also sets the context for changes in our role, away from being a majority funder of services and towards a strategic leadership role based on relationships, influence and leverage, particularly around other funding streams that may be available across the city which can support our objectives. We will also invite companies and philanthropic donors to get involved in this strategy as part of our developing social value strategy, as well as considering how businesses who supply us with services can get involved in addressing some of these issues.

Where we cannot deliver something directly, or where services are more effectively delivered by others, we want to work with partners across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, and with the general public. This will enable us to rise to Westminster's challenges, developing new solutions to make the best use of resources and deliver effectively on shared objectives. This is a common theme throughout the strategy, which is clear about the many roles needed to deliver our goals and achieve more co-ordination across the city.

We are committed to continuing investment in our core services such as outreach and accommodation, whilst also targeting resources at tackling issues early to avoid long-term costs to public services.

Rough sleepers currently cost public services a disproportionate amount, due to the complexity of issues they face and their use of public services in an unplanned way. An entrenched rough sleeper has been estimated to cost the public an average of £16,000 per

year³ through demands placed on public services (compared to £4,600 for the average adult). The current pressures on finances across all partners mean it is vital that we work together to reduce these costs.

Our services are already sector leading, but we want our future offer to be even more focused on outcomes and added value for rough sleepers.

We've already seen successful changes to service commissioning and delivery and we want build on these. For example, in 2014 we introduced a payment by results element to our outreach services contracts which has raised the bar in performance and encouraged an outcomes-focused approach. Going forward, we will consider further implementing payment by results where this makes sense to help focus provision around outcomes and add value for rough sleepers, to stimulate innovation and to encourage efficiency and value for money. We also want to combine such approaches in how we operate and what we seek from our partners to increase the tangible impacts we can make to homeless individuals.

To deliver a more outcome focused approach, we will require the support of partners from other agencies to share information and data so we can make sure we are measuring performance accurately and reducing duplication of interventions from services.

So far, the focus has been on the council's leadership role across Westminster and how we must retain overall strategic leadership to build partnerships locally to support a co-ordinated response to complex problems. But these are issues of much wider concern, and tackling them effectively will require London-wide (and in some cases UK-wide) action. There needs to be a more joined-up response to rough sleeping and greater partnership working across London and the rest of the country – particularly as the problems become more complex and resources are increasingly at a premium.

Rough sleeping does not respect borough boundaries; tackling it effectively will mean our actions cannot either and we must work across borders to find lasting solutions for people. There is already some highly effective joint working across London boroughs and the Mayor on this issue, but this could go further. We want to work across areas and levels of London governance to find better ways of tackling the issue. With our track record of innovation and success in dealing with issues on a unique scale we believe we have much to offer in developing and implementing these approaches and will build on these to offer a wider leadership role. We will work with the Mayor and other local authorities, exchanging best practice and identifying areas where we can work together.

Our targets – the difference we will make

Setting targets has an important role in demonstrating our objectives and measuring success in achieving them. It is vital, however, that targets in a complex area like this are meaningful and realistic, particularly given that many of the underlying factors are beyond our control. For this reason, although we are committed to reducing rough sleeping and its impact on communities in Westminster, it would be misleading to set overall targets for reducing the number of people rough sleeping here as we have only limited influence over many of the factors behind this.

³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417230/150325_Addressing_Complex_Needs_-_final_publication_amended.pdf

That said, we will include meaningful targets for delivery during the period covered by this strategy to drive improvement in how we deliver our objectives and measure success, which are set out below:

- In 2015-16, 53% of people seen rough sleeping in Westminster who were new to the streets didn't spend a second night out because they were quickly supported off the streets. We want to increase this to at least 75% of new rough sleepers by the end of the strategy.
- We want to further reduce the scale of long-term rough sleeping in Westminster. One of the ways we will measure this is through a reduction in the proportion of rough sleepers who are seen on the streets for more than two quarters of the year. In 2015/16, nearly 15% of all rough sleepers in Westminster were seen for more than two quarters of the year and our target is to further reduce this to 5% by the end of the strategy.
- In 2015-16, 44% of people who left our accommodation (such as hostels, assessment centres and second-stage accommodation) did so for negative reasons, such as returning to the streets or being evicted. By the end of the strategy we want to reduce this to below 30%.
- One of our objectives throughout the course of this strategy is to focus on the mental health of rough sleepers. One way of measuring whether we are having an impact here is if individuals engage with services. Currently, 64% of people in our accommodation services with an identified mental health need are engaging with mental health services. We want to increase this to 80% of people by the end of this strategy.
- Rough sleeping and its associated behaviours have impacts on the wider communities in Westminster. Our aim is to reduce these impacts and one way we will measure this is through a reduction in the percentage of residents who say that homelessness/begging on the streets are problems in their area. In 2015, 20% of residents thought they were problems and our target is to reduce this to 15% by the end of the strategy.

Achievements in delivering the 2013 - 2016 Rough Sleeping Strategy

- We reviewed our supported accommodation services to better target provision and enhance joint working. All services now specialise in working with different groups of rough sleepers and a new specialist supported accommodation scheme has been opened for older men with complex needs.
- Our outreach teams, who support people to find routes away from the streets, now focus on particular groups of rough sleepers who have very different types of needs, rather than working on an area-by-area basis.
- We introduced an innovative 'payment-by-results' element to our outreach contracts which has raised the bar in performance.
- We have had huge successes in improving health outcomes for rough sleepers. A Homeless Health Coordination Project (HHCP) was launched which supports 19 accommodation services across Westminster to improve health access and decrease health inequalities of rough sleepers. This has had a big impact - 99% of rough sleepers in our accommodation services are now registered with a GP.
- We introduced a new hotspot team to deal with areas of the city experiencing particular problems with groups of rough sleepers. Staff across Westminster received training on how to use new tools and powers to deal with anti-social behaviour.
- There has been closer working with the Metropolitan Police and Home Office to help reduce rough sleeping by European Economic Area (EEA) nationals. We worked closely with partners to develop and pilot a new operational response to the issue.
- An innovation fund was introduced to drive innovation and new ideas in the sector – more than five projects have been awarded funding so far, including Westminster Homeless Action Together (WHAT) week.
- We supported the Westminster Homeless Action Together (WHAT) week in July 2016 which secured the help of over 300 volunteers to gather more information about our street homeless population to find out what could make a difference to their lives. We've reviewed the initial findings, which have helped inform this document and will incorporate the final findings in the final version of the strategy.

Priority 1 – Preventing rough sleeping and providing a rapid response

Concerned about a rough sleeper?

There is a simple step anyone can take that can help us start the process of providing help that has the best chance of getting someone off the street sustainably.

If you are concerned about someone sleeping rough contact StreetLink at streetlink.org.uk or call 0300 500 0914. They will make sure details are forwarded to local outreach teams in Westminster, and you can get an update on what happens.

Why is this important?

The best policy on rough sleeping is to stop it from happening in the first place. That will always be our overriding objective. Inevitably, this will not be possible in every case and we remain committed to the Mayor's aim that no-one who does arrive new to the streets of London should spend a second night out. The Mayor's No Second Night Out service provides a rapid response for those who find themselves rough sleeping for the first time in London. We know that this approach is working and preventing people from returning to the streets. In 2015-16, over half of the people seen sleeping rough in Westminster who were new to the streets did not spend a second night out.

Where possible, we will take more action to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping from happening in the first place. Although the council cannot prevent all rough sleeping, we do know there is more that can be done to support groups where we have the ability to intervene at an earlier stage.

For example, we know that people who have experienced some kind of institutional setting – such as prison, care or the armed forces – are one of the groups at most risk of ending up sleeping on the street. In 2015-16, 32% of rough sleepers in the city had previously been in prison. Some 25% of those identified as being at high risk of re-offending in Westminster are also listed on the rough sleeping database. This highlights the importance of joint working across sectors to help people at particularly high risk of rough sleeping.

Most people who sleep rough in Westminster do not, however, have local links here. Our most recent data suggest that a very small minority of new rough sleepers on Westminster's streets had their last settled base here. This means there are limits to what the council can realistically do to prevent everyone from rough sleeping here from the outset.

What are our objectives?

- a) Where it is possible for us to do so, taking more early action to prevent people from rough sleeping in Westminster in the first place.
- b) Preventing people who are released from prison, discharged from hospital or other institutional settings from ending up on the streets.
- c) Intervening early and assessing needs accurately and quickly for everyone who does find themselves on Westminster's streets.

Objective 1a – Acting early to prevent people from ending up on the streets

Our current approach:

Our Housing Options Service already has a strong and effective approach prioritising the prevention of homelessness. This helps a broad range of people in Westminster potentially facing the loss of their home, including providing advice and assistance, family mediation services, landlord negotiation and helping people find private sector accommodation. It is important to recognise the pressures on accommodation in Westminster as there is significant demand for housing in the borough and affordable housing in particular, and we need to manage people's expectations. These issues are explained in more detail in our [housing strategy direction of travel statement⁴](#).

Many single vulnerable people in the city who are at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping may need specialist, enhanced support to get back on track. We are already piloting a new programme to provide enhanced support to single vulnerable people with recognised local links and identified by council services as being at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping. People are assessed and offered individual plans to help them tackle the problems that put them at risk of homelessness and to put them on a sustainable path to independence. The type of support in each case will depend on the individual's needs, whether helping them make informed choices about their housing options; securing an immediate place to stay; providing help with getting and staying in work; or other support needs such as mental health.

We also work in partnership with embassies and voluntary sector organisations in other countries whose nationals make up high numbers of rough sleepers in Westminster to undertake preventative work.

At time of writing there is increasing discussion about changes that can be made to homelessness legislation to emphasise finding ways of preventing people from losing their existing homes in the first place. A Homelessness Reduction Bill is being promoted that would put prevention on a statutory basis. We support the shift towards prevention, but want to make sure that any changes to the law do not have unanticipated consequences for delivery of the specialist support for rough sleepers outlined in this strategy. We will work with national government and the other stakeholders in the sector to help ensure this does not happen.

Our new commitments:

- We will learn from the on-going pilot and use this to shape a new specialist, frontline service for single vulnerable people at risk of rough sleeping with recognised local links to Westminster when we re-design our housing options service in 2017.
- We will also draw on the learning from the No First Night Out pilots in other London boroughs to develop and implement approaches like rapid assessment and intervention for people before they spend a night on the streets.

⁴http://transact.westminster.gov.uk/docstores/publications_store/housing/draft_housing_strategy_direction_of_travel.pdf

- We will work with authorities in countries with high numbers of rough sleepers in Westminster to encourage their residents to ensure they have sustainable plans in place before they leave to travel here.

Objective 1b – Preventing people who are released from prison, discharged from hospital or other institutional settings from ending up on the streets

Leaving prison or hospital can be one of the triggers that lead people directly to the streets. In too many cases, opportunities to prevent rough sleeping are not always being taken. We know there is more work we can do to address this with partners in the city and will develop a multi-agency approach over the course of the strategy to tackle it.

Our current approach:

Our reducing re-offending services currently work to ensure that offenders are not in a situation where they have to sleep rough upon release. This includes action to save tenancies, resume housing benefit and secure a suitable address.

We also work with the Central London Clinical Commissioning Group on specialist discharge protocols for hospital patients who may be at risk or have a history of rough sleeping.

Our new commitments:

- We will strengthen communication and co-ordination between prison, probation, health and housing services on how discharge situations can be better managed.
- We will ensure that preventative work begins at the earliest point possible and develop an action plan for joint implementation to help reduce the number of those sleeping rough after leaving institutional settings.
- We will improve how we prevent short sentence prisoners who have a history of rough sleeping, or who have been in a hostel, from returning to the streets upon release from prison, by ensuring continuity of support and reducing confusion.

Objective 1c – Intervening early and assessing needs accurately and quickly for all who find themselves on Westminster's streets

This is a critical area of work for Westminster, carried out by our vital outreach teams. We support many people away from the streets so they don't spend a second night out. However, our target is to build on this success – so that by the end of this strategy, at least 75% of people who are new to rough sleeping don't spend a second night out on the streets.

Our current approach:

We ensure there is a rapid response for new rough sleepers so that they do not need to spend a second night out on the streets. Our outreach services - which work 365 days a year - intervene as early as possible to find them a sustainable route away from the streets. There is a critical role here for the public, residents and businesses to report rough sleepers to ensure our services can react quickly.

The needs of every rough sleeper are assessed to help find the best route away from the streets for them. For those who have complex issues and may not engage with us at first, our outreach teams continue to work with them, building up trust, to find them the most effective way off the streets for them.

Our new commitments:

- We think that giving more time to working intensively with a person to understand their needs, and helping to find the right solution for them at the beginning of our engagement, is more likely to be successful in preventing them from becoming homeless again. To do this we will commission a new assessment centre where rough sleepers can go when they first come off the streets. They will be able to stay there for a period of time while they have their needs assessed and will be helped to find the most appropriate solution. Any particular needs around, for example, mental health and substance misuse, can be accurately assessed and addressed at the same time.
- We will introduce a new person-centred assessment and referral process which will be used by all agencies working with a rough sleeper across the sector. This will help simplify and streamline the process for rough sleepers and agencies. It will also facilitate the sharing of information about those being helped and the support they have been provided with at all stages of the process.

Priority 2 – Supporting people to rebuild their lives

Why is this important?

For most 'core' rough sleepers with support needs who are living on the streets of Westminster, their housing status is not usually at the root of the problem. This is rather a consequence of more fundamental problems, such as alcohol and drug abuse, mental and physical health issues or other social problems (and often a complex and inter-locking combination of a number of these factors).

We need to work in partnership to help people address these often complicated underlying issues in their lives. Most of these will only be worsened by sleeping rough; tackling them will often require very specialist support provided over a long period of time. This is what many of our specialist services aim to address. Over the course of this strategy we want to work more closely with agencies across the city to support our objectives in this strategy and help people rebuild their lives.

What are our objectives?

- a) Offering every rough sleeper a personalised and sustainable route away from the streets, based on their circumstances.
- b) Improving rough sleepers' health and well-being, with a particular focus on addressing mental health and substance misuse issues.
- c) Taking a tailored approach to the needs of women who are rough sleeping in the city.
- d) Ensuring that all efforts in the city to help rough sleepers are co-ordinated and focussed on supporting people off the streets.

Objective 2a – Offering every rough sleeper a personalised and sustainable route away from the streets, based on their circumstances

Offering every rough sleeper a personalised and sustainable route away from the streets is at the core of this strategy. Our aim is to ensure that people have a route which gets, and keeps them away from the streets so that things do not deteriorate further. The importance of this is reflected in our target to reduce the proportion of people on the streets for more than two quarters of the year from 15% to 5% by the end of the strategy.

Our current approach:

Based on our initial assessment of rough sleepers, we compile a personalised package to take into account a range of associated factors including how long the person has been rough sleeping; whether they have local links here; whether they have support needs; and if they can access housing benefit.

Where an assessment shows an individual has local links to an area outside Westminster where they can access accommodation, families, friends, support networks and/or services, we may make an offer of a planned reconnection back to their home area. Reconnection can help people rebuild their lives in a sustainable manner, building on pre-existing social ties and support. There will be cases in which this may not be appropriate, for example if there

are overriding health needs, public or personal safety issues – no one can be expected to return back to their home area where there is a risk of violence.

For non-UK/I nationals, we work in partnership with the Home Office Immigration Enforcement to reconnect them to their home country, where this is appropriate. For those non-UK/I nationals who have significant support needs or have complex immigration cases, we provide more tailored support. We follow St Mungo's and Home Office guidance to address the needs of vulnerable foreign national rough-sleepers. We will continue to develop specialist support for vulnerable non-UK rough sleepers and victims of trafficking and modern slavery and also continue to broker and facilitate a small number of bed spaces for individuals with No Recourse to Public Funds for a short period of time to allow solutions for those concerned to be found.

Supported accommodation in Westminster is prioritised for vulnerable individuals who have identified links here or for those for whom reconnection is not appropriate. This provision includes 24-hour specialist hostels and semi-independent housing with specialised support. People receive support here to help them turn their lives around, regain their independence and address the complex issues they may be facing.

Our new commitments:

- We will provide an enhanced reconnection service to UK residents who need it. Additional support will be provided to vulnerable people who are being reconnected to their home area, linking them into support and services they may need.
- We will re-commission our accommodation services for rough sleepers in the city, looking to build in new ways of delivering services based on outcomes and introduce a small payment-by-results element to contracts and more opportunities for local involvement. We will work with our partners in the sector to deliver this approach - in particular to think together about new ways we can do things. We don't have all the answers; our focus will be on encouraging ideas and solutions from the experts who work with people on the frontline.
- We will explore the use of multi-disciplinary team models when re-commissioning both our outreach teams and accommodation services. These will bring together experts and professionals to tackle the various issues associated with rough sleeping that often need specialist support, including physical and mental health, immigration and housing advice. We are keen to develop different service models to increase chances for people to make changes.
- By linking in with Westminster's wider employment service offer, we will ensure that those service users who are ready to work are given the opportunity to move towards employment as a lasting route away from the streets. We will also do this by enabling more people in our accommodation services to volunteer and gain work and life skills through this route. To help deliver on this we will make seed funding available for projects that offer new ways of supporting rough sleepers, with a focus on those that can help people build up life skills, such as literacy and numeracy designed to be attractive and accessible to clients.

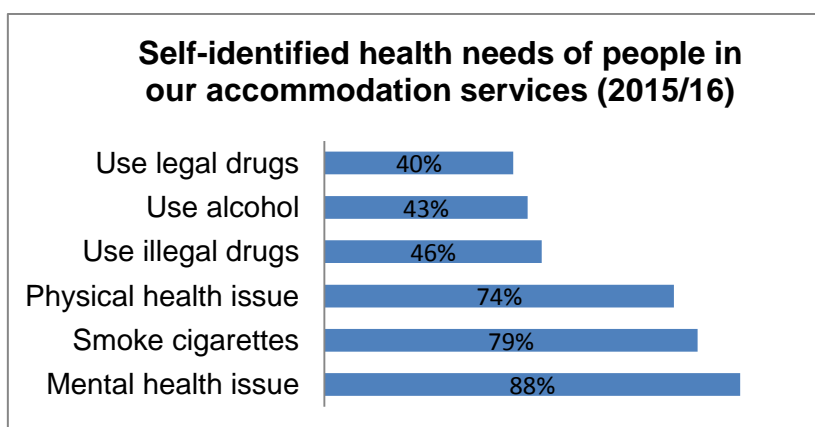
Objective 2b – Improving rough sleepers’ health and well-being, with a particular focus on addressing mental health and substance misuse issues

Rough sleepers have higher rates of physical and mental health problems than the general population. Some aspects of poor health are attributable to, and exacerbated by, sleeping rough. Some also play a role in becoming homeless in the first place.

National research identifies common health needs of homeless people - substance misuse, mental ill-health and dual diagnoses that cover both mental illness and substance misuse. This is supported by the self-assessments of former rough sleepers in our accommodation services and evidence from our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of Rough Sleepers Health and Healthcare carried out in 2013⁵.

When homeless people do access health services, they are likely to do so in an unplanned way (for example through hospital accident and emergency services) and to be in a state of chronic ill health, often because of a reluctance to access primary or community care before things deteriorate. This results in longer stays in hospital and multiple readmissions, and has clear cost implications for the NHS.

Our new health assessment tool introduced in our accommodation services shows that last year, 88% of those helped identified themselves as having a mental health support need. We need to work closely with partners to address this effectively and our target over the course of the strategy is to increase the percentage of people in our accommodation services with a mental health need who are engaging with mental health services from 64% to 80%. Some of the key challenges are due to the complexity of issues that can be involved – many rough sleepers suffer from problems which may not fit into defined categories of mental illness or do not meet the statutory threshold for intervention.



Source: 2015/16 Common Health Assessment Tool (CHAT) completed by 268 service users within the rough sleeping pathway

These issues often have a major bearing on the services we provide – particularly for those rough sleepers who get stuck in a ‘revolving door’ of rough sleeping. These are often service users who move in and out of services because they abandon their placement or are evicted

⁵ <http://www.jsna.info/document/rough-sleepers>

after serious or consistent anti-social behaviour. On average, we estimate that there is an eviction or abandonment of this kind in services every week.

While it is unacceptable for someone to keep accommodation where they are putting others at a significant risk of harm, we recognise that dealing with the issue by eviction may simply move the problem elsewhere - either to another hostel or back onto the streets.

Research suggests that an underlying and pre-existing mental health problem is a significant factor which often contributes both to rough sleeping in general and also to these kinds of behaviours in particular. This includes significant emotional and psychological disorders (such as complex trauma and personality disorders), often exhibited through behaviours indicating underlying difficulties with relationships or managing emotions, which can be 'self-medicated' by substance misuse, self-harm, anti-social behaviour or crime. These are many of the same behaviours we experience in our services and in particular, where people revolve in and out of services.

We particularly want to tackle this 'revolving door' issue, which is unproductive for those involved and an ineffective use of resources. This is reflected by our target for the next three years to reduce the percentage of people who leave our accommodation for negative reasons, such as returning to the streets or being evicted from their accommodation, from 44% to 30%.

Many rough sleepers have a dual-diagnosis – that is they suffer from mental health problems as well as being alcohol- or drug- dependent – which can affect their access to mental health services whilst they misuse substances.

There have also been sharp increases in the use of 'novel psychoactive substances' (NPS), formerly known as 'legal highs', including amongst people who are rough sleeping. These substances are synthetically produced and are designed to mimic the effects of other drugs such as ecstasy or cannabis and other hallucinogens ('spice', for example, mimics cannabis); but are often cheaper and more readily available than other drugs. We understand these substances vary from packet to packet and the effect that they can have on people has been extremely severe. The withdrawal from the drug is often very hard to control and can be very painful. We have had reports of psychotic episodes, severe stomach cramps and individuals falling unconscious soon after ingesting an NPS. Individuals can often also become violent to members of the public or even outreach staff offering support, suggesting a wider threat to community safety. The recently enacted Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 bans the production, supply and importation of these substances.

Our current approach:

Westminster already has robust and effective joint-working arrangements with health and care partners across the city, including NHS England, Central and West London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and other agencies. The multi-agency Westminster Health and Wellbeing Board leads this joint approach and we will work closely with the Board to ensure there is effective strategic oversight in delivering this priority.

We are already working with our CCG partners, together providing joint leadership and innovation in our approach to improving the health of rough sleepers in Westminster, whether accommodated or on the streets. These innovations are having an impact - 99% of

people in our accommodation and over 90% of our core rough sleepers on the streets are now registered with a GP.

We will continue to facilitate planned access to the NHS for rough sleepers, to prevent more people from needing to use pressured and costly hospital services inappropriately or only using them at times of crisis.

Our new commitments:

- We will work with our CCG partners to take forward the commitments to rough sleepers when our Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy is launched, building on the expertise within the city and delivering better health and wellbeing outcomes for rough sleepers.
- We will work with the NHS and specialist services to expand on a 'pre-treatment' approach, bringing NHS services to people who may find it difficult to access and engage with mainstream therapy and treatment. We will build on pilot projects already underway to trial this approach, such as drop-in counselling and problem gambling and anger management support services.
- We will find new ways of working with people who revolve in and out of our services, including the introduction of trial runs in our supported accommodation or training flats to help build confidence.
- We will commission a new specialist service aimed at helping those whose accommodation placements repeatedly break down and who are regularly excluded from other services.
- We will ensure our services respond to the psychological and emotional needs of rough sleepers by ensuring every service meets the Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) standard and that this is monitored consistently.
- We will explore new routes into treatment services for rough sleepers in accommodation services. A new service for local people who have a dual-diagnosis has recently been launched and the success of this will be monitored and assessed.
- We will work with the Police where appropriate to slow down the supply of NPS onto the streets and raise awareness of the devastating impact of these drugs with users and those trying to help (such as our partners and the wider public). Our focus is not only prevention but supporting the health needs of those using NPS and we are committed to working with substance misuse agencies and health partners to tackle this.

Objective 2c – Taking a tailored approach to the needs of women who are rough sleeping in the city

In 2015-16, 17% of rough sleepers in Westminster were women. However, it is likely that this figure is an underestimate due to the 'hidden' nature of rough sleeping among women and the specific dangers they face, including increased threats of violence, abuse and sexual exploitation. The triggers and experiences of female rough sleepers tend to be distinct, something which was confirmed in the interviews carried out during the WHAT week.

Our current approach

We have in place a number of specific services for women, including dedicated hostels and an overnight safe space for older women. We have supported a number of innovations, including sponsoring and securing funding for a very successful pan-London project which provides targeted support for female rough sleepers with mental health problems.

Our new commitments

- While we maintain our strong track record in reducing the number of older women on the street with mental health problems, we will also focus on finding more solutions for the younger group that present with different needs, many of whom have complex histories of trauma and substance misuse.
- We will create even greater accessibility to our services and embed an approach which is informed by the consequences of the kinds of trauma women in this situation have often experienced, working with multi-disciplinary teams who have the expertise to tailor their approach.
- We will also develop more options for women with the above profile who are in couples on the street, with sophisticated responses to circumstances around these relationships, which can include substance misuse, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

Objective 2d – Ensuring all efforts in the city are co-ordinated and focused on supporting people off the streets

We understand that to reduce rough sleeping across Westminster, we must deliver overall strategic leadership across the city. Over the course of this strategy, we will have a particular focus on developing our role as the strategic leader and co-ordinator of a city-wide approach, focused on getting people away from the streets.

We know that the public are rightly concerned about rough sleeping and are keen to help people away from the streets. This is an objective that we all share. We want to build on this so that we can work in partnership with the community to make a real difference to peoples' lives and reduce rough sleeping. To do this, we will engage with the public and provide them with the information they need to help them make informed decisions about how they can make a real difference, including through volunteering.

There are a number of other organisations working here to support those on the streets. These can range from faith-based charitable organisations to companies with corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes. It is important that the council leverages support from these organisations to ensure that the help given by services across the city is consistent, effective and geared towards helping people move away from the streets.

There are a number of groups and businesses in Westminster responding to the issue through the distribution of food and drink through soup runs or other on-street donations of tents, sleeping bags and clothing.

Whilst these may be well-meaning actions and are intended to meet peoples' immediate needs, they also have the unintended consequence of helping to maintain a street lifestyle for some people and counteract the more tailored approach intended to meet peoples' long-term needs that underpins this strategy. In some cases these kinds of services can draw in

others who are not rough sleeping or who could access more sustainable support elsewhere. This in turn can exacerbate anti-social behaviour and other problems on the street around the service. However, we understand that some organisations will continue to run such services despite our concerns and there are limited options for the council to stop this.

Our current approach:

We currently engage with other local authorities and non-commissioned services and link in with regional and national decision making through the Greater London Authority and national government (particularly the Department for Communities and Local Government). We have supported the development of the role of non-commissioned services, funding a network for all those wishing to support rough sleepers to share good practice and partner in their approaches.

The success of the WHAT week has shown the success of genuine partnership working and is a model of working together which we would like to build on over the course of this strategy.

We make it easy for people to find opportunities to volunteer to help rough sleepers in the city through our volunteering website [Team Westminster](#). We also run a Time Credits scheme to recognise and reward people's voluntary efforts.

Our new commitments:

- We will establish a strategic cross-council and cross-partner board to oversee the implementation of this strategy.
- We will be ready to advise businesses, the public and charities on how to make a real change to the lives of rough sleepers should they wish to do so.
- We will increase the opportunities available for people to volunteer, by working with charities in the city to develop new and innovative ways in which people can lend their time to support rough sleepers.
- We will work with the voluntary sector to explore other new ways in which non-commissioned services can provide a more consistent, effective and co-ordinated response, and will consider a quality mark in which providers can work to raise the quality of their service.
- We will provide guidance to the construction sector to minimise the risks of rough sleeping in and around construction sites in the city.

Priority 3 – Tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping the city safe

Why is this important?

The reasons for an individual being on the streets are often extremely complex and can be intertwined with other anti-social behaviour and activities.

Our experience is that enforcement action which follows, and is linked to, offers of support can often actually help the individuals concerned and drastically reduce the negative impacts on the city as a whole. This personalised approach will require a more joined up approach to intelligence-led action, taking a wide range of information into account when deciding whether or not to enforce and the type of action that should be taken. In most cases this should start with the assessment made of an individual's needs and situation at the start of their rough sleeping. We know that to deliver this priority, a close and positive partnership with the police is critically important and we are committed to working closely with them to deliver our objectives.

This approach is based on the insight that runs throughout this strategy - that rough sleeping is damaging and dangerous for the individual and for the community as a whole and that we may need to take the difficult decision to take enforcement action against anti-social behaviour.

Across this priority, our target is to reduce the percentage of residents who say that homelessness/begging on the streets are a problem in their area to from 20% in 2015 to 15%.

What are our objectives?

- a) Ensuring every individual who is rough sleeping is clear about support available to them and the actions and behaviours that are expected of them in return.
- b) Ensuring the unacceptable impact of anti-social behaviour associated with rough sleeping is reduced.
- c) Working with other agencies which are able to tackle criminality and other offences such as breaches of immigration and freedom of movement rules where these are committed by rough sleepers.

Objective 3a – Ensuring that every rough sleeper is clear about support available to them and the actions and behaviours that are expected of them

It is reasonable to be clear with those who end up on Westminster's streets that they have responsibilities, in terms of how they engage with our offers of support away from the streets and the behaviour we expect while they are there.

We provide every individual a reasonable offer of a route away from the streets, and we want to make it clear that there may be consequences if this offer of help is refused and their

behaviour impacts on others. This might include enforcement action if this is required to protect themselves or the wider community.

Our current approach:

Our outreach services talk to rough sleepers about their situation and work hard to encourage individuals to engage positively with support services.

Our new commitments:

- We will develop a new Westminster Rough Sleepers' Charter to ensure every individual who is rough sleeping is clear about both the support they will be given and what will be expected of them. This will be available to Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and other partners to share with those on the streets.

Objective 3b – Ensuring the unacceptable impact of anti-social behaviour associated with rough sleeping is reduced

Westminster is the UK's cultural, economic and political heartland. Our city contains some of the most recognisable locations and institutions in the world. It is also home to nearly a quarter of a million residents, with that population swelling to 1.1 million every day as workers and visitors pass through the city.

As a local authority, we have a responsibility not only to rough sleepers themselves, but also to our residents, businesses and visitors. Although it is not illegal to sleep rough, there are activities and behaviours that are often associated with rough sleeping which have an unacceptable and detrimental impact on communities.

Littering, street urination and defecation and drunk and disorderly behaviour can be extremely damaging for the areas and communities where they take place.

Our current approach:

We take action against unacceptable and anti-social behaviour and to reduce the impact of these activities by using the powers available to us under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. We have invested in a successful pilot to address street-based, day-time activity, which provides a link between social care and enforcement.

We work with the Police, who have further powers to tackle anti-social behaviour, and with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), which often take a leading role in addressing such issues in their areas given the impact of rough sleeping on their members' workers and customers. In particular, we are committed to working together with BIDs to make targeted interventions to help reduce rough sleeping in their areas, primarily through training security teams and increased reporting.

We also work with enforcement agencies to minimise risks to outreach workers and the public at large.

Our new commitments:

- We will embed the use of rough sleeping assessments and data in our City Management services to ensure that enforcement is only undertaken in full knowledge of an individual's situation and only as a last resort. This will allow us to target our enforcement

efforts on those individuals who may benefit the most from our intervention whilst ensuring that we are protecting communities from their behaviour.

- We will maximise the impact of our on-street presence through our frontline staff, from our City Inspectors to our parking marshals and waste contractors, getting them to act as the eyes and ears of the council in implementing this approach to enforcement.

Objective 3c – Working with other agencies which are able to tackle criminality and other offences such as breaches of immigration and freedom of movement rules where these are committed by rough sleepers

We know that begging is a major issue of concern to Westminster residents, businesses and visitors. Begging is illegal and it is the responsibility of the Police to address this issue and other low level criminality. It can range from passive begging, which often sustains addictive behaviours, to more aggressive forms targeting Westminster's streets to generate income, often on an organised basis. In some cases, people may have been forced into these activities through crimes such as human trafficking or modern slavery. As noted in objective 2a, staff are trained to identify where people have been victims of these crimes and respond appropriately. It is also important that authorities are able to go after the individuals behind crimes such as trafficking, and we will do everything possible to support the agencies responsible for dealing with them.

Many of those involved in begging are not rough sleepers and the two issues need to be treated distinctly. Furthermore, begging can simply sustain a life on the streets for rough sleepers, rather than helping them to engage in a sustainable route away from them in the way we have explained in this document.

Where non-UK/I nationals are rough sleeping without a clear plan to get themselves off the streets and refuse voluntary reconnection, enforcement action may be required if it is considered proportionate. It is primarily the responsibility of the Police and Home Office Immigration Enforcement to enforce the responsibilities set out in UK, and relevant European Union or other international law during their time in this country.

Our current approach:

We work in partnership with BIDs to enable them to make targeted interventions to address begging and crime in their areas whilst ensuring the individuals involved are signposted to support services.

Through our City Management Services, we gather evidence on the behaviour of individuals which can be used in criminal prosecution cases where appropriate.

We have worked successfully with the Police and Home Office Immigration Enforcement to pilot a new joined-up approach to the issue of EU nationals who end up rough sleeping. This has involved testing a process of administrative removal for those individuals not observing the requirements of EU freedom of movement rules. This has led to a change in the Home Office operational approach whereby in certain instances rough sleeping is considered an abuse of free movement rights and EU nationals can be removed from the UK where it is proportionate to do so.

We support Operation Unite 16 which focuses on non-UK national offenders to reduce vice, aggressive begging, street gambling, theft and rough sleeping.

Our new commitments:

- We will develop a dedicated action plan to take a strategic approach to tackling begging in Westminster across the different agencies involved.
- We will work with relevant authorities to do more to tackle issues such as exploitation and trafficking.
- For non-UK EEA nationals who refuse help and engage in unacceptable behaviour, we will continue to work with Police and Home Office Immigration Enforcement, who have the power to arrest or where appropriate 'administratively remove' those who abuse their freedom of movement rights.

Glossary

Central and Eastern

Europe (CEE): a term used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development for the group of European countries comprising Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and the three Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Combined Homelessness and Information Network

(CHAIN): the multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London.

Clinical Commissioning

Groups (CCG): clinically-led statutory NHS bodies responsible for the planning and commissioning of health care services for their local area.

Complex trauma: may be diagnosed in adults or children who have repeatedly experienced traumatic events, such as violence, neglect or abuse.

Corporate Social

Responsibility (CSR): aims to ensure that companies conduct their business in a way that takes account of their social, economic and environmental impact. It can take many forms and target a range of issues.

Dual Diagnosis: the term used to describe patients with both severe mental

illness and problematic substance misuse.

European Economic Area

(EEA) National: someone who is a citizen of one of the countries in the European Economic Area, which includes EU countries and also Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Enforcement: the formal act of compelling observance of or compliance with a law, rule, or obligation (civil or criminal).

Freedom of movement

rights: freedom of movement allows citizens of the European Union (EU) to move to, live in, and in certain circumstances access the welfare system of the EU country to which they have moved.

Health and Wellbeing

Board: the forum administered by the council bringing together key leaders from the health and care system work to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population and reduce health inequalities.

Homelessness: a broad term which includes people who live in unsuitable housing, don't have rights to stay where they are or are sleeping rough.

Home Office

Immigration

Enforcement: the

division of the Home Office responsible for enforcing immigration law in the UK.

Joint Strategic Needs

Assessment: a process by which local authorities, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and other public sector partners jointly describe the current and future health and wellbeing needs of its local population and identify priorities.

Novel psychoactive

substances: (also previously known as “legal highs”): synthetic substances which are designed to mimic the effects of other drugs such as hallucinogens, ecstasy or cannabis; but are often cheaper and more readily available than other drugs. The recently enacted Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 bans the production, supply and importation of these substances.

No First Night Out: a project working across some local authorities which seeks new approaches to prevent individuals from sleeping rough for the first time.

No Recourse to Public

Funds: an immigration condition restricting access to public funds, including many mainstream benefits such as welfare and housing.

No Second Night Out: a service commissioned by

the Mayor which focuses on helping those who find themselves rough sleeping on the streets of London for the first time.

Non-UK/I National: a person who is not a citizen of either the UK or the Republic of Ireland.

Personality disorder: conditions in which an individual differs significantly from an average person, in terms of how they think, perceive, feel or relate to others.

Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE): an approach to service delivery which ensures that provision takes account of, and responds to, the emotional and psychological wellbeing needs of the individual.

Reciprocal Agreement: an agreement between one or more local authorities to provide services for a rough sleeper in another borough, which may be better suited to the individual's needs.

Reconnection: the process by which people sleeping rough, who have links with another area where they can access accommodation and/or social, family and support networks, are supported to return to this area in a planned way.

Rough Sleeping: a term which refers to people who are sleeping or bedding down in the open air, in places such as streets, doorways, parks, benches or bus shelters, or even in sheds, car parks or tents.

Social Investment: the use of finance to achieve a social, as well as a financial return.

Social Value: a way of thinking about how scarce resources are allocated and used. It involves looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at what the collective benefit to a community is when a public body chooses to award a contract.

Street Counts: one the means of monitoring rough sleeping by counting all the rough sleepers in Westminster on one night every few months.

StreetLink: a national referral service for the public to connect people sleeping rough with local services.

Supported

Accommodation: accommodation commissioned by the council that provides specialist support (to varying degrees) to former rough sleepers and other vulnerable people.



Appendix 2

Westminster City Council: Draft Rough Sleeping Strategy 2017-2020 Summary

Executive Summary

Westminster City Council spends more than any other council in the UK on tackling rough sleeping and helping people off the streets.

Our work means that there is a route away from the street for everyone. Over half of new rough sleepers met by our outreach teams never see a second night out and there is a bed space for everyone in genuine need of help.

Our new draft Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how over the next three years we will focus on further reducing rough sleeping by preventing even more people from ending up on the streets. Where someone is already sleeping rough, it shows how we will do all we can to support them away from the streets as quickly as possible, helping them to turn their lives around.

And it sets out how we will do this and more at a time of significant funding pressures, by taking a leadership role and becoming more creative about how we, and our partners, help people to rebuild their lives. There are many reasons why people sleep on the streets of Westminster, not all of which the council can control, which makes it all the more important to work together.

With the right solutions and bold actions, rough sleeping is not inevitable. It is harmful and dangerous, and the longer someone sleeps on the street, the more harmful and dangerous it gets. Our draft Rough Sleeping Strategy shows how all our efforts over the next three years will be directed at getting more people off the streets.

What we know about rough sleeping in Westminster

2,857 people were seen rough sleeping in Westminster during 2015-16. This is 35% of all rough sleepers in London and more than the next seven ranking boroughs combined including the next highest amount in Camden which had 641 during the same period. Since November 2014, the number of non-UK national rough sleepers has exceeded that of UK and Irish nationals. Non-UK nationals can now make up to 65% of rough sleepers in Westminster on any given night.

Our priorities

Over the next three years, we have three key priorities to reduce rough sleeping:

1. Where it is possible for us to do so, taking more action to prevent people from rough sleeping in the first place and providing a rapid response when people do end up on the streets.
2. Supporting people who are sleeping rough to rebuild their lives – and to stay off the street.
3. Tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping the city safe.

These priorities are supported by specific objectives, concrete commitments and measurable targets that we believe will build on our current practice and help to realise our vision. These are set out in the strategy but some of the new proposals include:

- Working more closely with particularly vulnerable people, such as those coming out of prison or at risk of losing their homes, to prevent them from ending up on the street.
- Better understanding individual rough sleepers' needs by commissioning a new assessment centre where people can stay when they first come off the streets. There they will have their needs thoroughly assessed and be offered personalised support plans that help them back into the community.
- Developing more services for female rough sleepers who often have a history of trauma and abuse, and face distinct challenges on the streets.
- Taking more action to address the health needs of rough sleepers, with a particular focus on mental health issues and substance misuse. We will look at new ways to help people engage with services and raise awareness of the devastating impact of new drugs such as 'spice' on users and those trying to help amongst partners and the wider public.
- Being clear about when we will take enforcement action where there is anti-social behaviour, and using a personalised approach to tackle it.

Our targets

We believe our targets have an important role in demonstrating our objectives and measuring success in achieving them. It is vital, however, that targets in a complex area like this are meaningful and realistic, particularly given that many of the underlying factors are beyond our control. They are set out below:

- In 2015-16, 53% of people seen rough sleeping in Westminster who were new to the streets didn't spend a second night out because they were quickly supported off the streets. We want to increase this to at least 75% of new rough sleepers by the end of the strategy.
- We want to further reduce the scale of long-term rough sleeping in Westminster. One of the ways we will measure this is through a reduction in the proportion of rough sleepers who are seen on the streets for more than two quarters of the year. In 2015/16, nearly 15% of all rough sleepers in Westminster were seen for more than two quarters of the year and our target is to further reduce this to 5% by the end of the strategy.
- In 2015-16, 44% of people who left our accommodation (such as hostels, assessment centres and second-stage accommodation) did so for negative reasons, such as returning to the streets or being evicted. By the end of the strategy we want to reduce this to below 30%.
- One of our objectives throughout the course of this strategy is to focus on the mental health of rough sleepers. One way of measuring whether we are having an impact here is if individuals engage with services. Currently, 64% of people in our accommodation services with an identified mental health need are engaging with mental health services. We want to increase this to 80% of people by the end of this strategy.
- Rough sleeping and its associated behaviours have impacts on the wider communities in Westminster. Our aim is to reduce these impacts and one way we will measure this is through a reduction in the percentage of residents who say that homelessness/begging on the streets are problems in their area. In 2015, 20% of residents thought they were problems and our target is to reduce this to 15% by the end of the strategy.

Rough Sleeping in Westminster- Evidence Base

Evaluation and Performance Team, Policy,
Performance and Communications

Appendix 3



Summary of Findings

Who?

- Embedded long term rough sleepers tend to be UK and Irish nationals
- 33% Increase in rough sleeping across London
- Significant increase in foreign national rough sleepers – 61% of rough sleepers in Westminster were foreign nationals in the November 2015 street counts.
- Due to the hidden nature of rough sleeping, it is difficult to count exact numbers but 2,570 individual rough sleepers were recorded in Westminster in 2014 - 2015

Where?

- The top clusters for rough sleeping in the borough are within St. James Ward (from Trafalgar Square through Covent Garden, the Strand ending in Aldwych), in the West End (mainly along Oxford and Regent streets). Clusters also appear in Victoria around Victoria train and coach stations and along Marylebone Road on the southern outskirts of Regent's Park and where Edgware Road meets Marylebone flyover
- The majority of rough sleeping tends to take place in business areas, tourist hot spots and Westminster stress areas
- Begging clusters overlap with rough sleeping clusters in the borough

Impacts

- There are a number of impacts in the borough, including to the rough sleepers themselves, residents, businesses and visitors
- The top referrers of rough sleepers are members of the public
- 20% of residents in the 2015 City Survey said that homelessness/ begging on the streets is a problem

Costs

- 42% of assessed rough sleepers had one or more support needs in 2014/15
- Estimates were made about the costs of different types of rough sleepers to multiple services over a number of years - with more significant costs to services the more long term the rough sleeper

Our Research Questions

- **Who is sleeping rough in Westminster?**
- **Where do people sleep rough in Westminster?**
- **Are there any seasonal trends?**
- **Who is affected by rough sleeping and what is the impact on their lives/ livelihoods?**
- **What is the cost of rough sleeping to services?**
- **What impact does rough sleeping have on residents, businesses and visitors?**

What do we mean by rough sleeping?

Rough Sleeping is:

People sleeping or bedding down in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation such as car parks.

Homelessness is:

A broad term, but generally used to depict the condition of people without a regular dwelling. People who are **homeless** are most often unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure and adequate housing, or lack fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. Under the law, even if someone has a roof over their head they can still be homeless because they may not have the right to stay where they live or their home may be unsuitable to live in.

Begging is:

Begging is the solicitation of money or food. Beggars may be found in public places such as transport routes, urban parks, and near busy markets.

Two Data Sources

There is no single data source that can be used to count rough sleeping in Westminster- two main data sources were used to build the evidence base:

CHAIN Data

- CHAIN is the Combined Homelessness and Information Network
- It is a multi-agency database, recording information collected by outreach teams in London about people seen sleeping rough.
- CHAIN was created to capture information and track the needs of embedded Rough Sleepers and is useful for capturing information about the embedded cohort of rough sleepers.

Westminster Street Counts

- A count is a snapshot of the number of rough sleepers in local authority areas on a single night within each quarter.
- Counts are carried out with an independent verifier present to ensure high data quality
- Counts are useful in capturing changes to the population, location of rough sleepers and nationality information which is not easily recorded on CHAIN.



**EVIDENCE
BASE**

Police data can sometimes enable us to understand information about people who will not give details to an outreach worker.

Counting rough sleepers is not straightforward

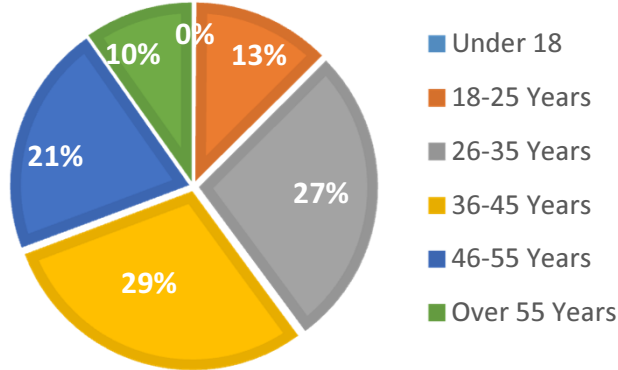
	CHAIN Data		Rough Sleeper Street Counts
✓	Comprehensive high quality data from across London	✓	Counts all individuals seen bedded down
✓	Data captured on a daily basis	✓	Independent verifier present at the counts
✓	Personal data is taken and stored on the database	✓	Police presence encourages rough sleepers to provide their details
✓	Avoids double counting individuals seen more than once	✗	Counts carried out sporadically (3-5 times per year)
✗	Rough sleepers who refuse to give details cannot be counted		

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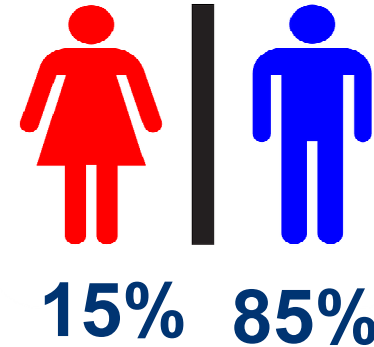
Each data set has its limitations, however together, they provide a more complete picture of rough sleeping in the borough than either would in isolation.

Who are the rough sleepers in Westminster?

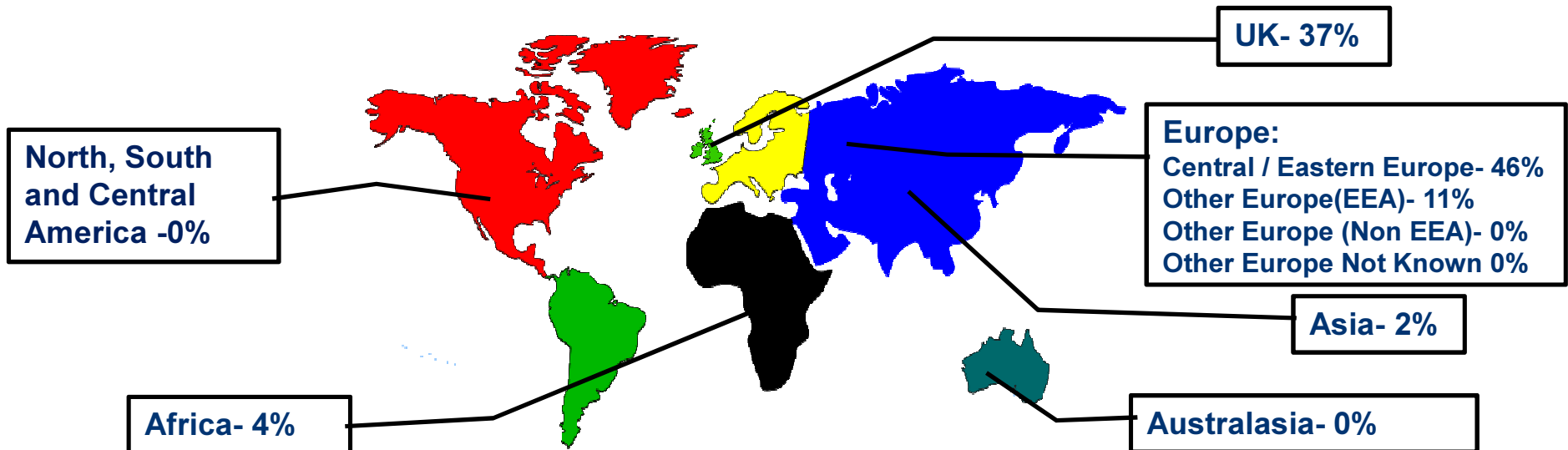
ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WESTMINSTER BY AGE- CHAIN 2014 - 2015



ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WESTMINSTER BY GENDER - CHAIN 2014 - 2015

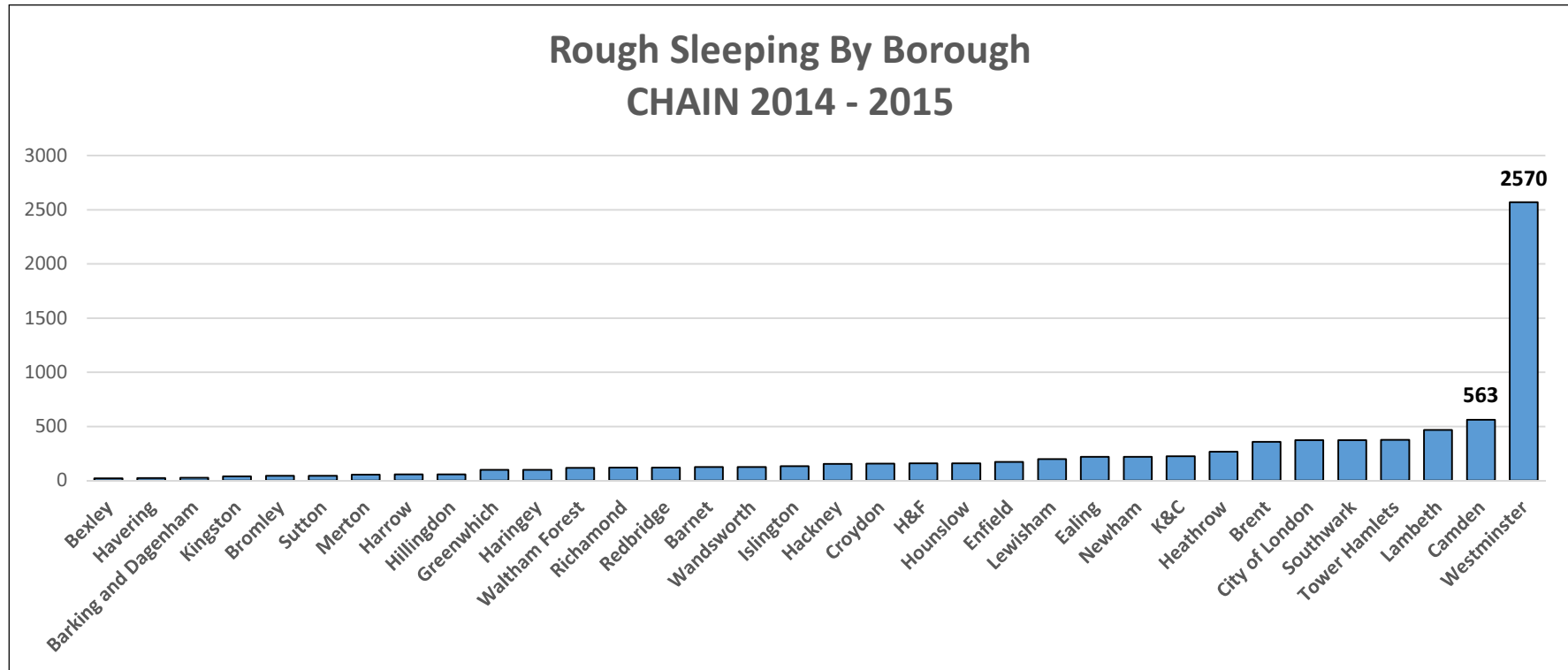


ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WESTMINSTER BY NATIONALITY - CHAIN 2014 - 2015



Westminster has more than 4x the number of rough sleepers than Camden

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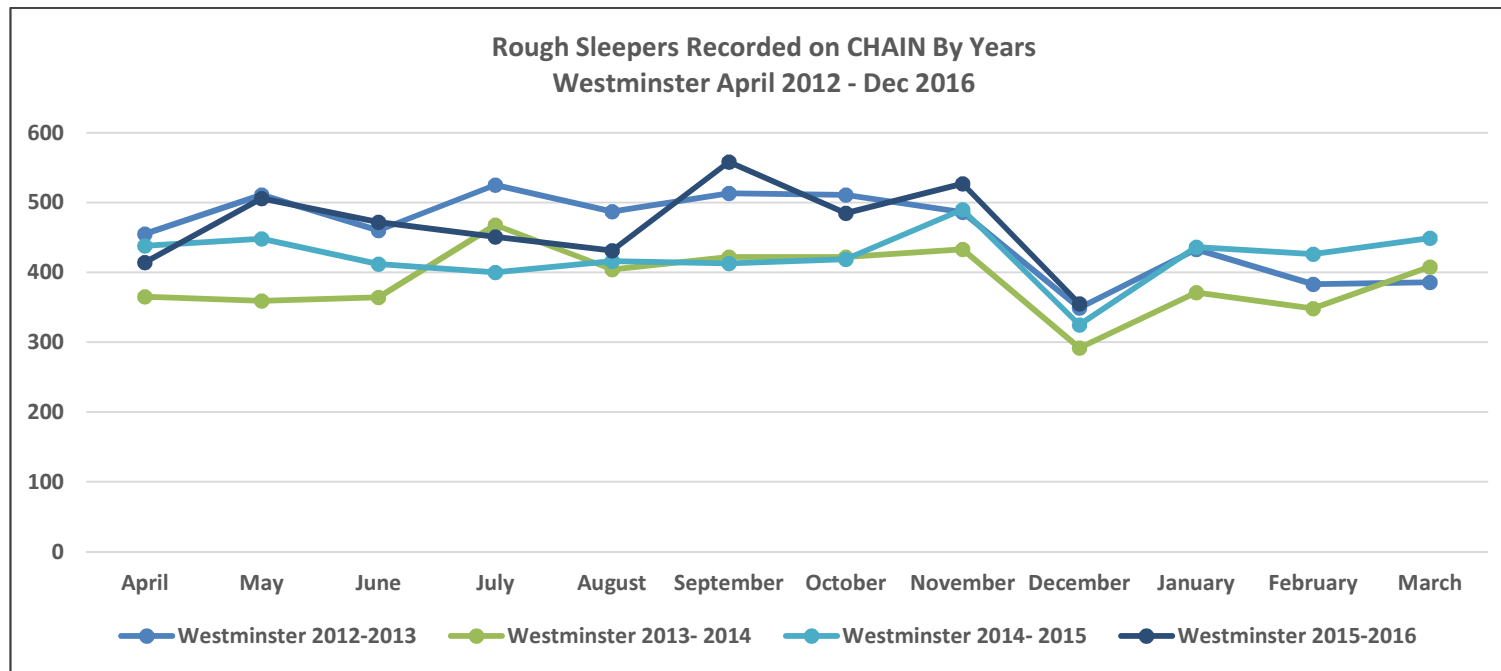


Westminster has more rough sleepers than any other London Borough; 31% of London’s rough sleepers were seen in Westminster and there were more than four times the number of rough sleepers in Westminster than in Camden.

Note:

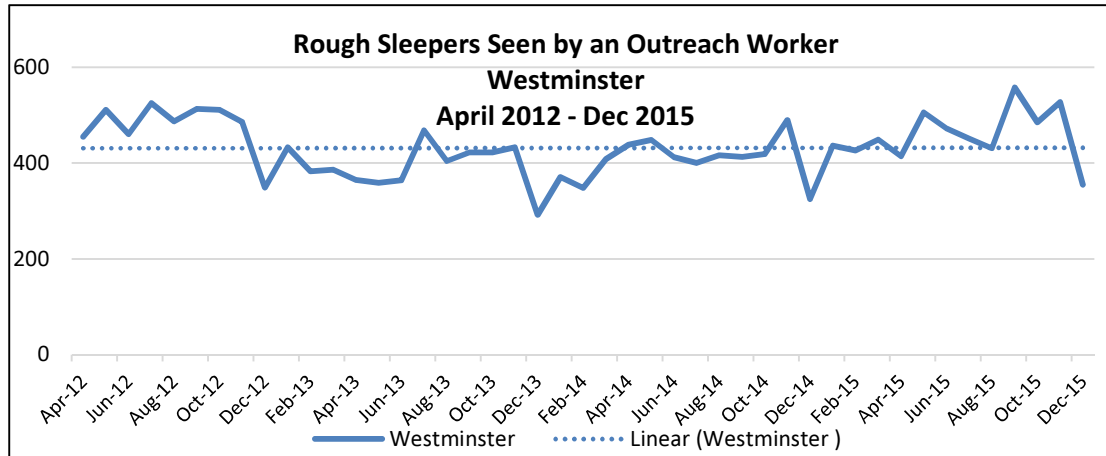
Some rough sleepers may have been double counted due to movement across boroughs.

Rough sleeping follows a similar trend every year in Westminster



The winter months have lower rough sleeper numbers than any other time of the year. This reduction is likely to be linked to the additional rough sleeping provision in December in the form of winter shelters resulting in fewer rough sleepers on the streets.

Westminster rough sleeper counts show a rise but CHAIN shows static numbers



This chart shows the number of unique individuals recorded by the outreach workers in the CHAIN database and acts as an initial gauge of the caseloads of outreach teams. In isolation, the CHAIN line chart only illustrates part of the picture as it suggests that rough sleeping has remained relatively stable over the years.

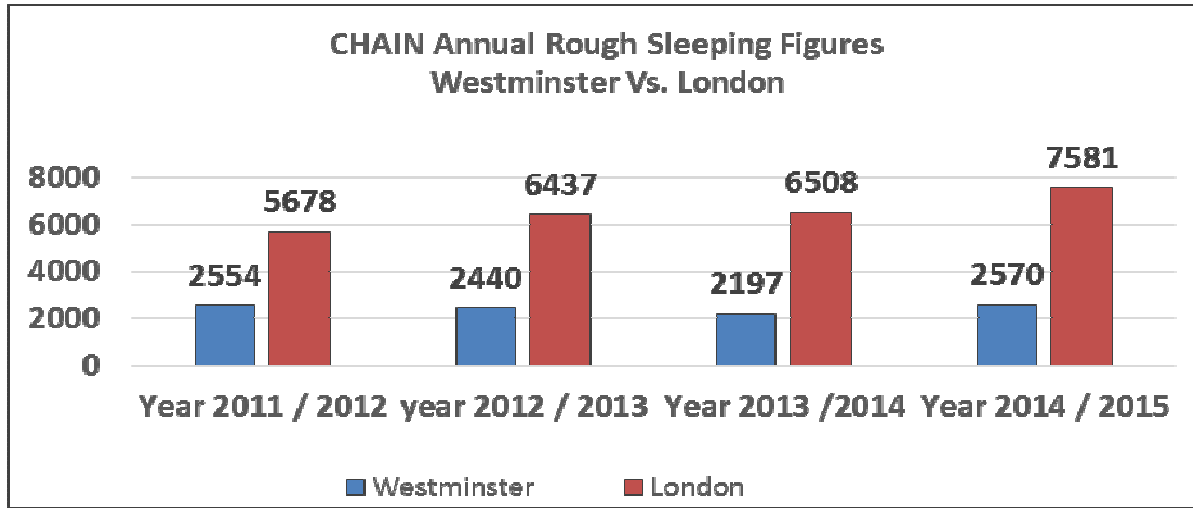
Westminster counts data (the number of individuals counted on one night within a month) shows that rough sleeping has increased by 136% (when March 2012 counts are compared to November 2015 counts). Further investigation of the counts data shows that the UK & Irish nationals counts have remained fairly consistent, but the foreign national numbers have increased by as much as 420% (when March 2012 count is compared to November 2015).

Month and Year	Foreign Nationals Count	UK & Ireland	Total Rough Sleeping Count
21 st Mar-12	29	83	112
26 th Sep-12	23	78	101
29 th Nov-12	34	97	131
28 th Mar-13	37	89	126
20 th Nov-13	52	94	146
9 th Apr-14	75	82	157
26th Nov-14	182	83	265
18 th Feb-15	101	67	168
28 th May-15	150	77	266
24 th Sep-15	181	85	294
26 th Nov-15	151	95	265
25 th Feb-16	214	86	328

Tipping Point

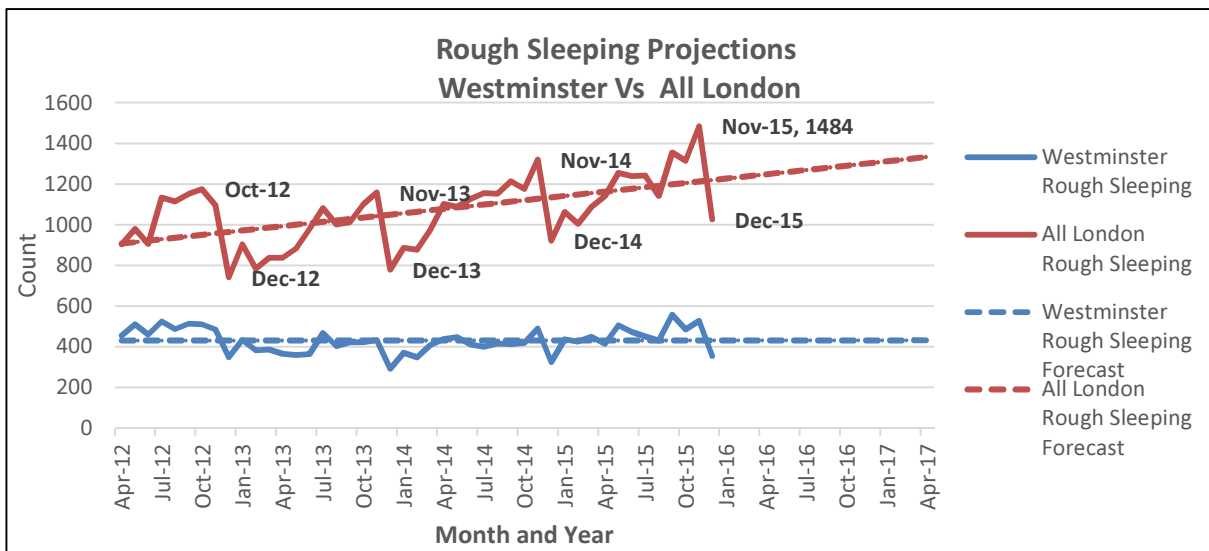
The difference in the CHAIN totals and the counts totals is likely to be linked to the methods in which each data set is collected. CHAIN shows a higher caseload (between 300-500 people per month) and the counts data shows a lower count total (between 100-300 per count) because the counts data is taken from a few hours over the course of one evening per month, whereas CHAIN data includes all people seen in the borough over the course of the month. Furthermore, foreign nationals, who seem to have had the largest impact on the count data, are not easily being recorded on the CHAIN database.

CHAIN reports an increase in Greater London's rough sleepers



According to CHAIN, Westminster's rough sleeping totals have remained stable whilst Greater London has seen a steady increase of rough sleepers.

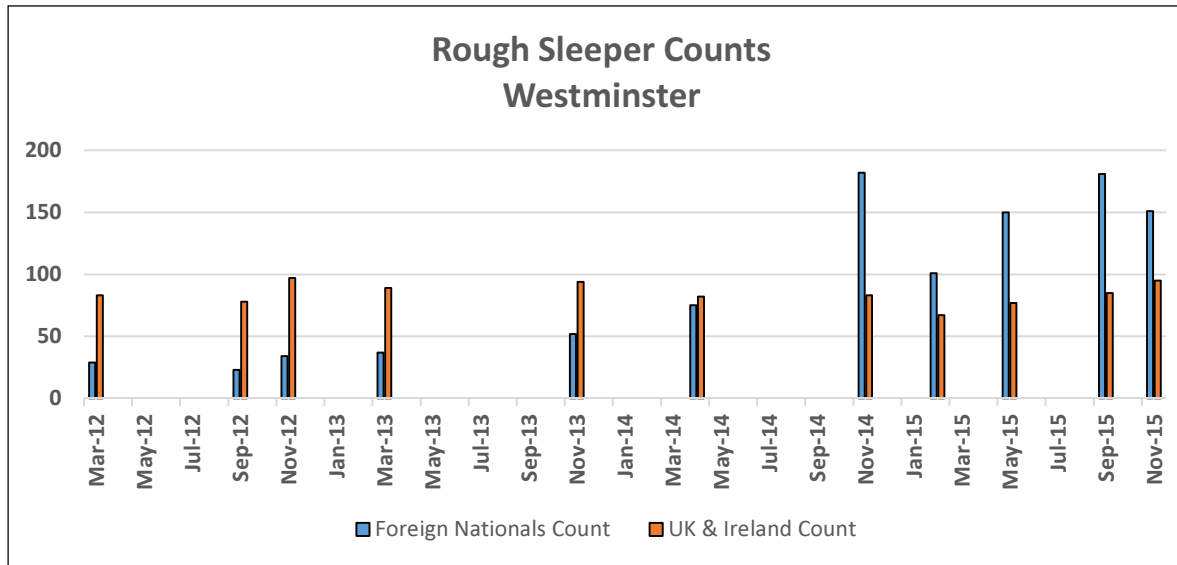
The Greater London rough sleeping numbers have increased by 33% when the 2011/2012 figures are compared to 2014/2015. In contrast, Westminster's experienced a smaller change, with numbers increasing by just 1% over the same period.



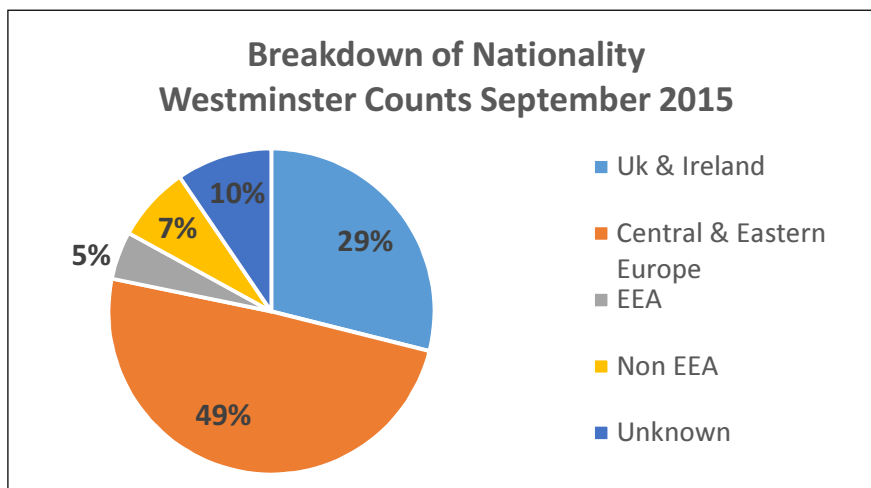
Using the historical CHAIN data, it was possible to make a projection of what the rough sleeping picture may look like next year. London's rough sleeping figures are expected to increase over the next year whilst Westminster's figures are expected to remain stable. As with all projections, this does not take into account changes in other external factors.

Street counts show that foreign national rough sleepers have increased

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The change in the rough sleeping count population is more clearly demonstrated in the bar graph. It can be seen that until March 2014, UK and Irish nationals were the largest group of rough sleepers in the borough. However, in November 2014, the foreign national population surpassed that of UK and Irish nationals and in November 2015, non-UK nationals represented 61% of the total number of rough sleepers seen in the counts.



Around 1/3 of rough sleepers in the September 2015 counts are UK and Irish nationals, half are from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (of which 79% are Romanian).

Non-UK Nationals

•CHAIN data also show that in 2014/15, 63% of rough sleepers in Westminster were foreign nationals. However, as set out earlier, the methods of collecting data for CHAIN can lead to a under count of people who do not have a social care need – many of whom may be non-UK nationals.

•Westminster count data show a higher proportion of non-UK national rough sleepers –29% of rough sleepers in September 2015 were from the UK & Ireland

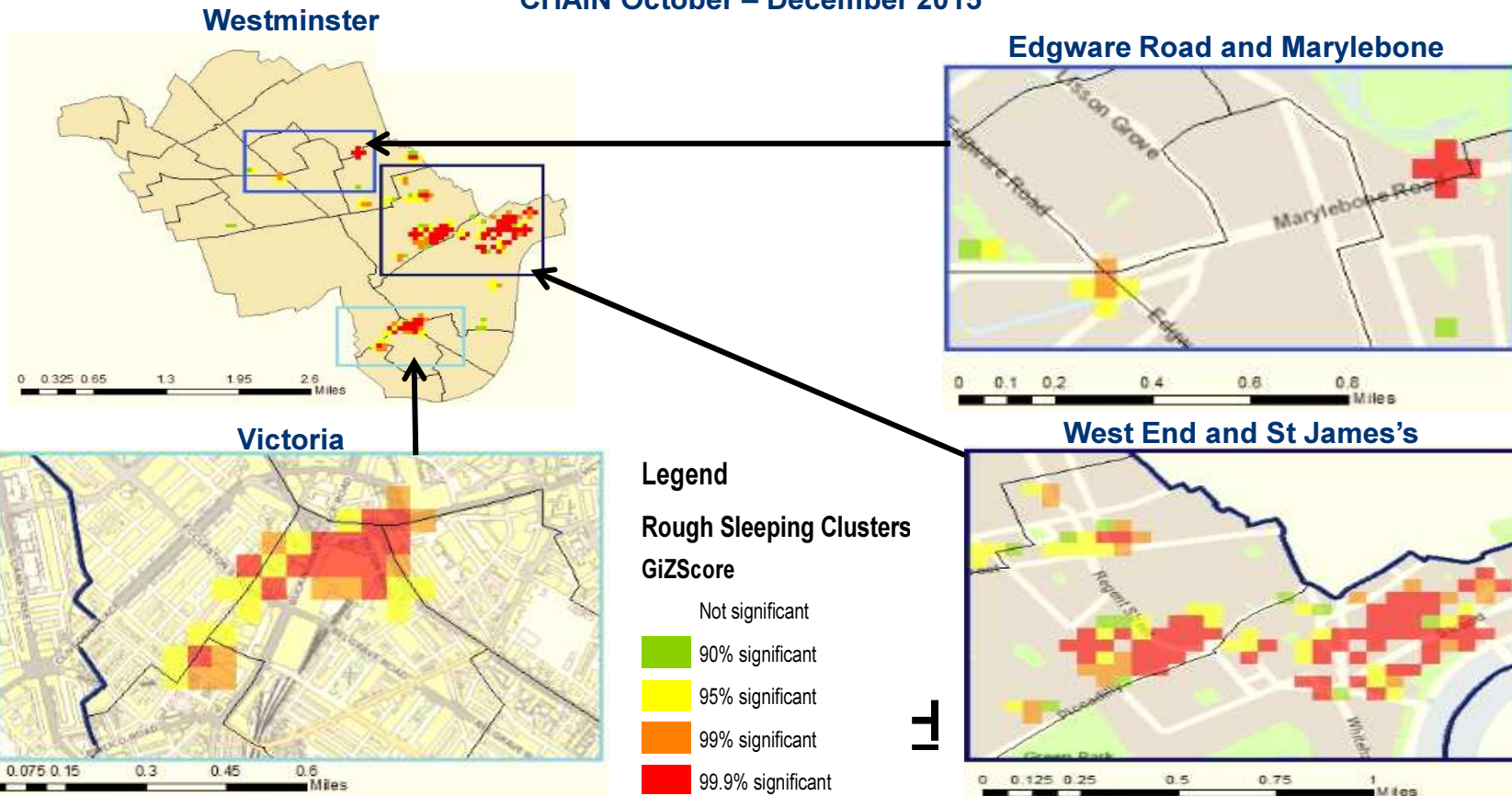
•There are limited data available on the support or other needs of non-UK nationals. However, in September 2015, representatives from Westminster, Tower Hamlets and St Mungo's Broadway visited Bucharest, Romania's capital, to look at the most effective ways of reducing the number of Romanian Nationals on the streets of London and the UK. The report from this visit broke Romanian Nationals into two main groups:

1. **'Economic migrants'** – Almost all are roughly 20 - 40 years old, males with limited (or no) support needs. They maintain that they are in the UK to find work and provide a wage for their families in Romania. It is important to remember these people are not homeless but are prepared to sleep on the streets in an absence of free accommodation.

2. **'Begging gangs'** – this includes both the people who organise criminal begging gangs but also more vulnerable people, including Romani people, who may be manipulated into travelling to a location to beg.

Where are the Rough Sleeping Clusters in Westminster?

Rough Sleeping Clusters in Westminster
CHAIN October – December 2015

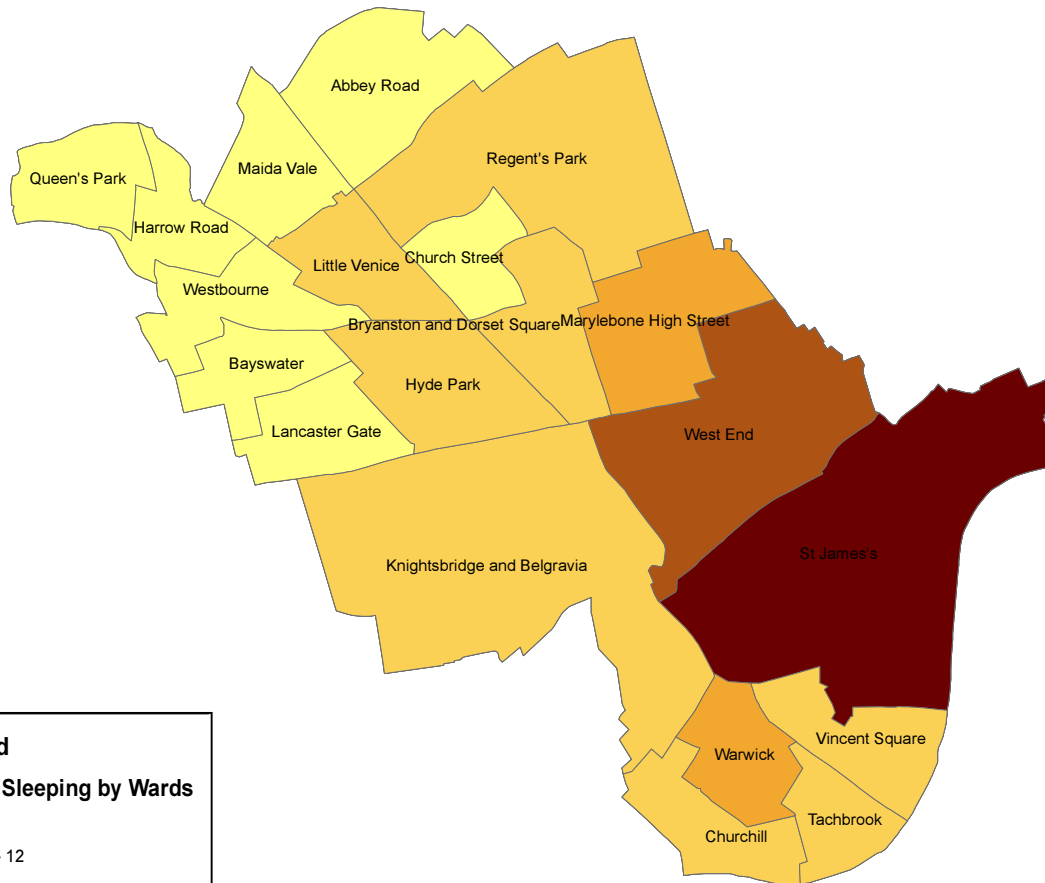


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Coordinates of rough sleeper locations taken from the CHAIN indicate that in the borough of Westminster, there are several rough sleeping clusters. The largest and most extensive of these clusters are within St. James's Ward (spanning from Trafalgar Square, Covent Garden, the Strand and ending in Aldwych), and in the West End (mainly along Oxford and Regent streets). Clusters also appear in Victoria around the Train Station and Coach Station (note this was the only large cluster directly next to a mainline train station) and along Marylebone Road on the southern outskirts of Regent's Park and where Edgware Road meets Marylebone flyover. All of these clusters are within 90 and 99.9% significance, meaning that the spatial pattern did not occur by chance.

St. James's and the West End are the wards most affected by rough sleepers

Rough Sleeping Ward Map October – December 2015



Legend
Rough Sleeping by Wards
Count

- 0 - 12
- 13 - 36
- 37 - 87
- 88 - 286
- 287 - 576



The rough sleeping clusters suggest that there is a high concentration of rough sleepers in locations which are business areas, tourist hot spots and stress areas rather than in residential locations.

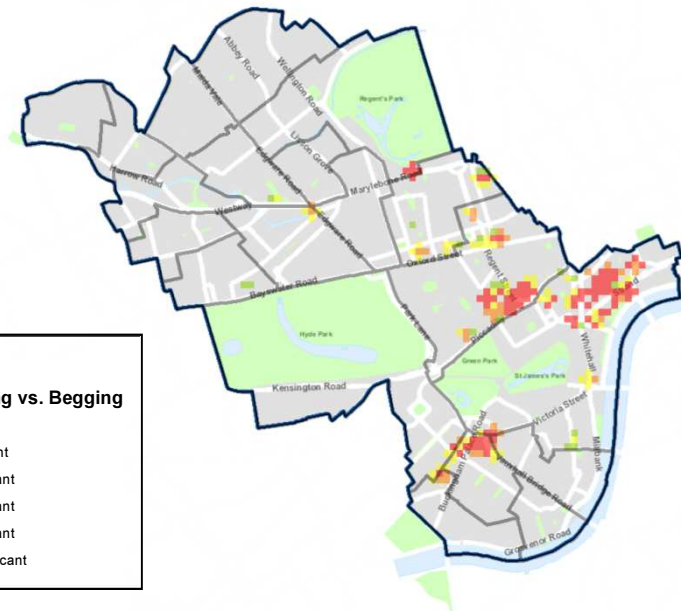
- **Edgware and Marylebone** are Westminster stress areas
- **Regent Street and Oxford Street** in the West End
- Along the **Strand** in St. James's
- In and around **Victoria** (Victoria train station and transport hubs such as the coach station).

As a result, the wards which the clusters fall within also appear in the ward maps to have the highest distribution of rough sleeping. These wards are:

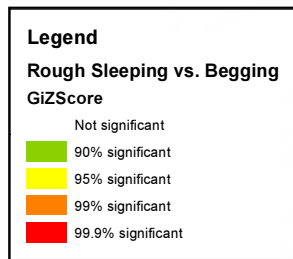
- St James's
- The West End
- Marylebone High Street
- Warwick

Rough sleeping is more spatially dispersed than begging

Rough Sleeping Clusters
CHAIN
October – December 2015



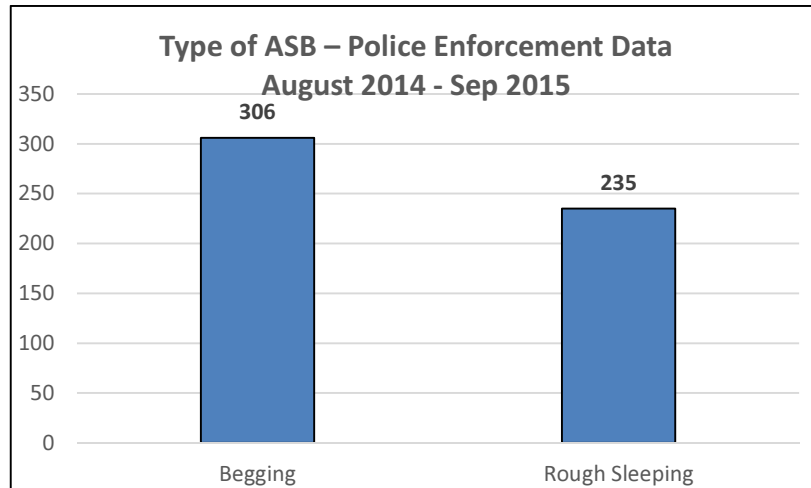
Begging Clusters
CAD Calls October – December 2015



The rough sleeping and the begging clusters show that there are some areas where there is overlap, especially in the West End and along the Strand. Rough sleeping however is slightly more dispersed than the begging.

Although the maps show that begging and rough sleeping take place in many of the same locations, it is not possible to identify a statistically significant link between them.

Enforcement Action

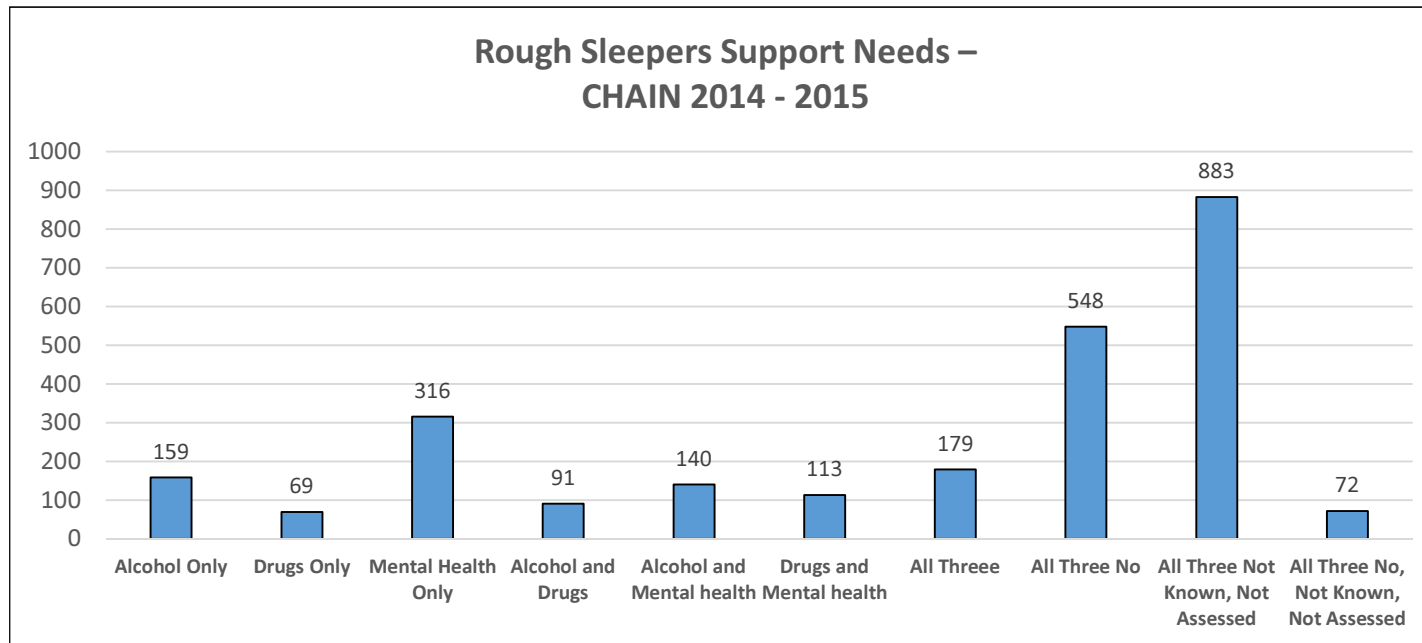


There were 235 individuals recorded as rough sleeping and 306 begging in the police records from August 2014 – September 2015. None of the individuals who were issued with enforcement action for rough sleeping were subject to any enforcement for begging.

It must be considered that rough sleeping on its own is not an ASB or a criminal offence, it is the behaviour associated (e.g. littering of sleeping equipment) which results in enforcement. On the occasions where a rough sleeper is also seen begging, they are likely to be issued with an enforcement action to address the begging. As such, the data may not accurately reflect the numbers of those involved in both.

Begging and vagrancy is the highest in the Strand and Mayfair. West End and China Town had the highest increase in begging and vagrancy from Nov 2015 –Jan 2016.

Many rough sleepers have complex support needs

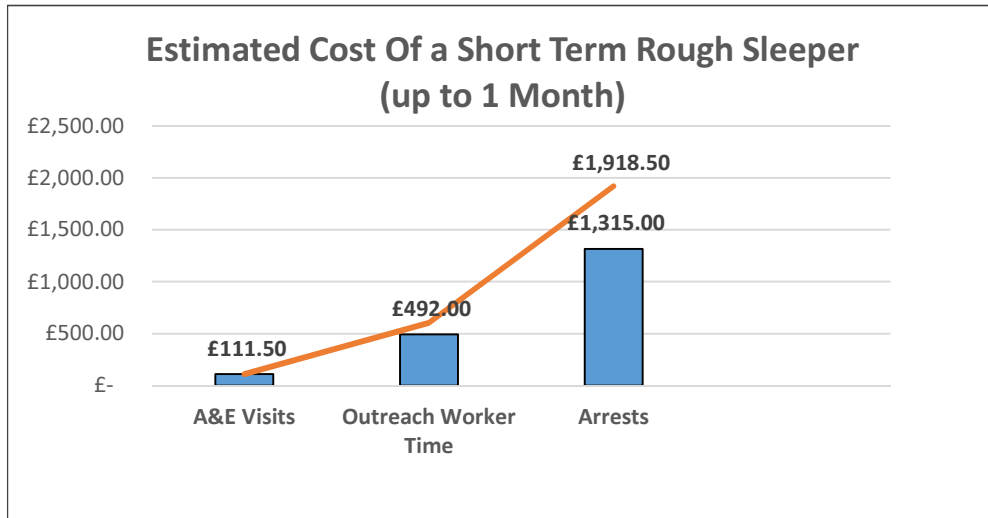


42% of those assessed who are recorded on CHAIN have one or more support needs, though those with mental health need is the largest of the three. It is important to stress that this only reflects the rough sleepers recorded on CHAIN.

Many of the rough sleepers lead chaotic lives and refuse assessment – that is why for 34% of the rough sleepers ('All three not known, Not Assessed'), it is unclear what their support needs are.

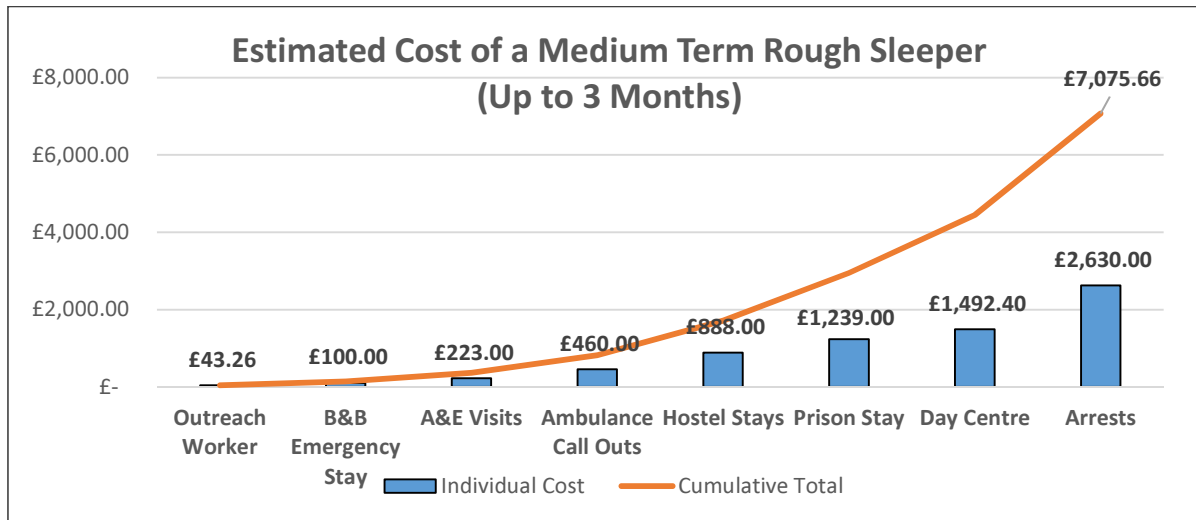
Long term rough sleepers cost more due to repetitive service contact

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The case studies of four rough sleepers with varying degrees of needs were provided by the rough sleeping team. The incident numbers for each of the areas such as crime, health, accommodation, and other services were identified and the average costs from national research, estimates from Westminster data, and local knowledge were applied. NB: these case studies are based on core UK & Irish rough sleepers who are entitled to support in Westminster, rather than the foreign national population.

Note: All costs, including national figures, will have some level of assumption, and therefore are only to be used as a guide.

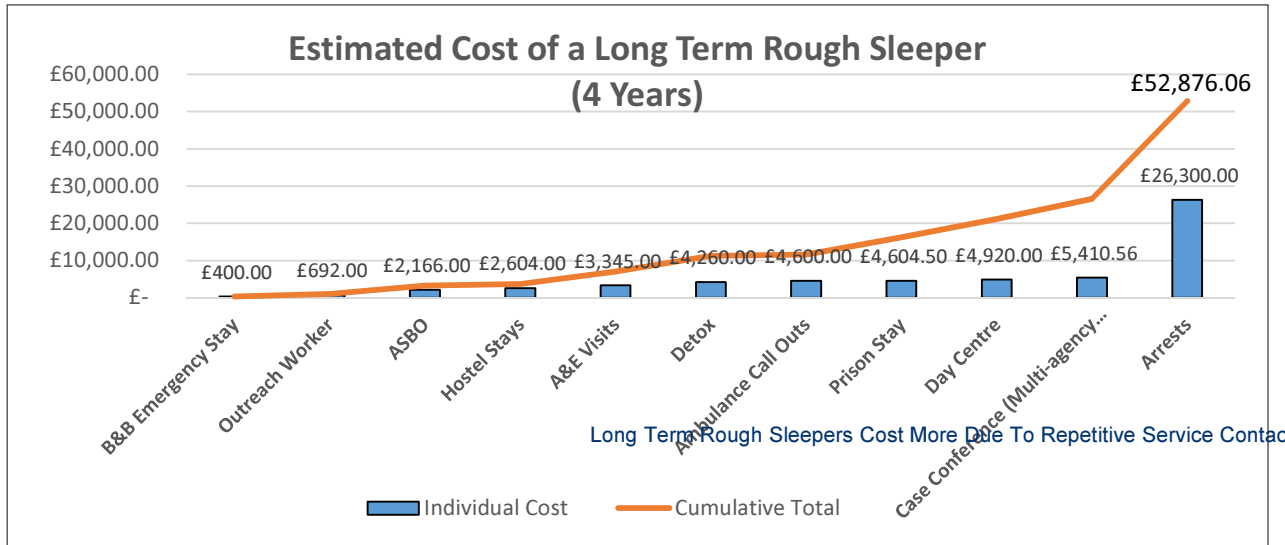


The short term rough sleeper has only used 3 services, compared to the medium term rough sleeper who has used 8 services.

The bar graph shows that just two extra months on the streets for the medium term rough sleeper, can result in an additional £5187.16 spread across services.

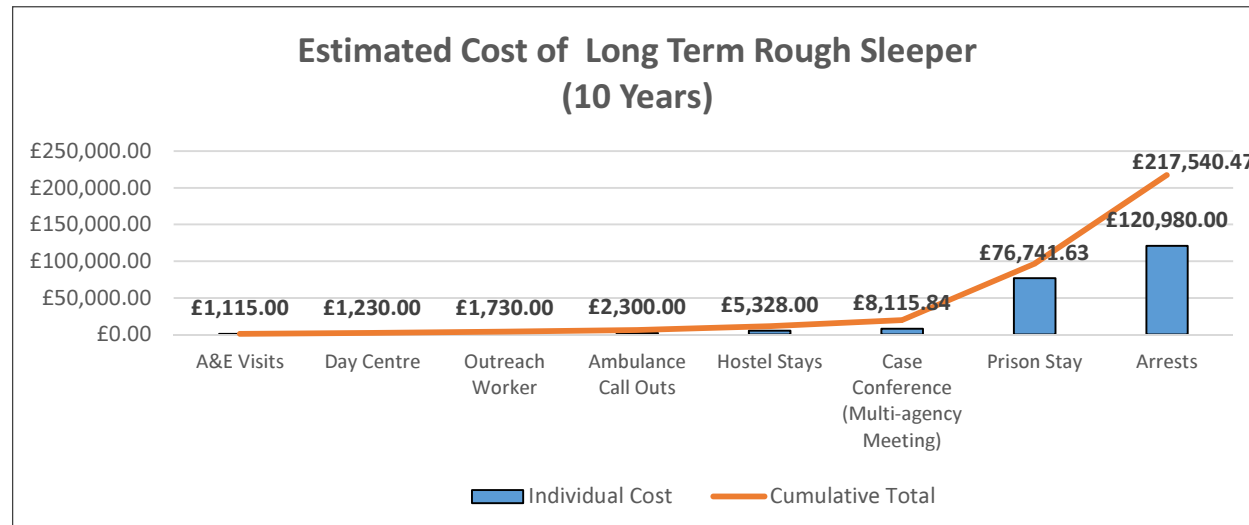
Long term rough sleepers cost more due to repetitive service contact (2)

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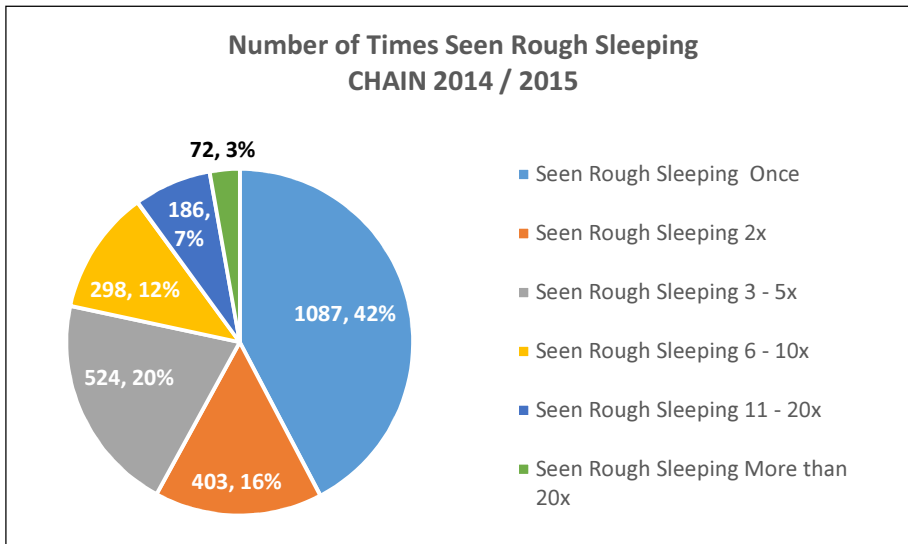
It is estimated that the rough sleeper of four years costs services an additional £45,800 in comparison to the medium term rough sleeper.

Although just three more services were used by the long term rough sleeper (4 years), the services had to respond to the needs of this individual on multiple occasions. In short, the longer the duration of rough sleeping, the more costs incurred to services through the repetition of care / enforcement action.



The estimated cost of a rough sleeper of 10 years is an additional £164,664.41 to services in comparison to the long term rough sleeper of four years. In the case of the rough sleeper of 10 years, eight services used and an average outlay of £22,000 per year could be incurred by services.

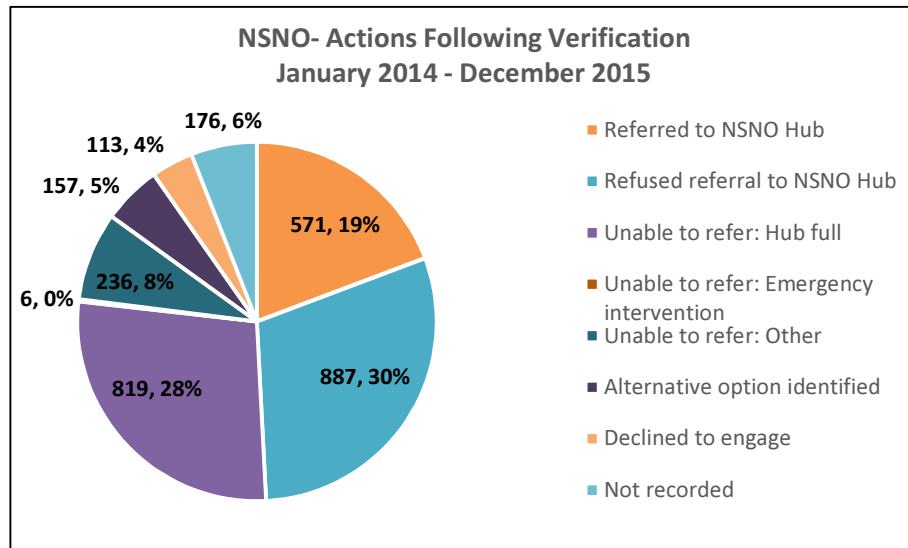
Prevention is better than cure



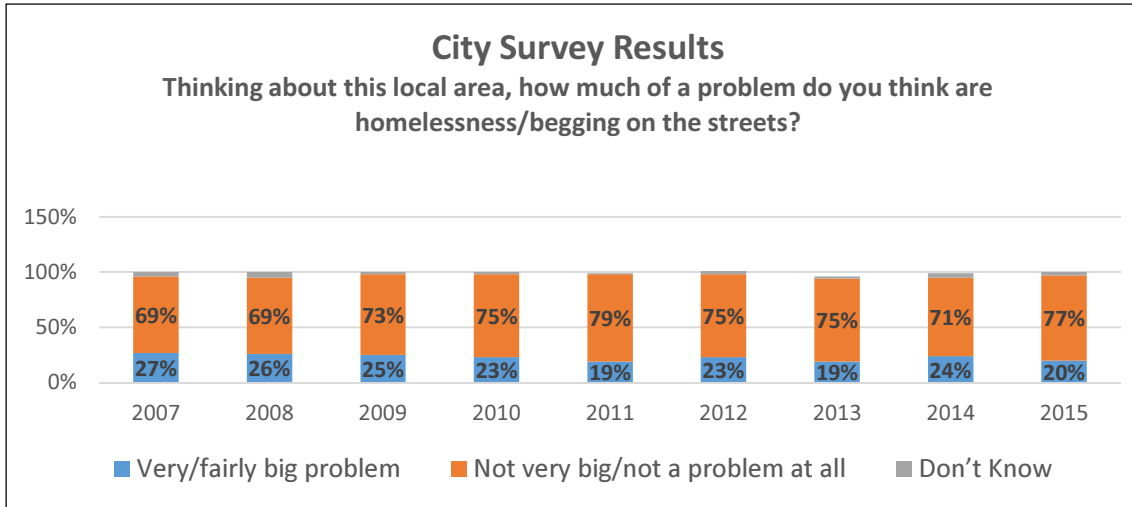
42% of the total rough sleepers observed only stayed out for one night, whilst 3% were seen bedded down 20 times or more.

At a workshop held with rough sleeping experts in January 2016, it was clear that that preventing people from becoming regular rough sleepers, minimises the risk of being trapped in an endless cycle of service interventions, and not able to re-integrate with society.

No Second Night Out (NSNO) focuses on helping those who find themselves rough sleeping on the streets of London for the first time. Data from NSNO shows the how high the demand is for early intervention. Even though 30% of rough sleepers offered referral at a NSNO hub refused, for 28% of those seen for the first time, the hubs were full.



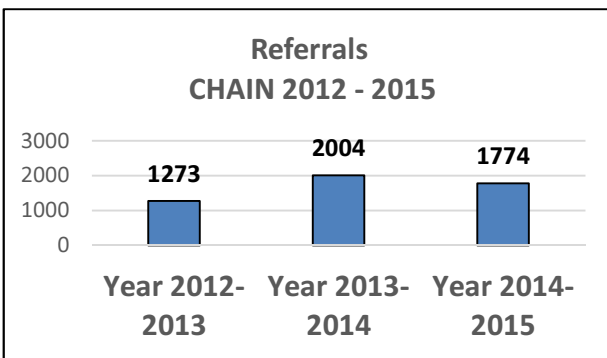
20% of residents think homelessness/begging on the streets is a problem



The City Survey results show that 20% of residents considered homelessness/begging a problem in 2015. This has remained fairly consistent since 2007. However, as the previous slide shows, rough sleepers are primarily located in areas which are business areas, tourist hot spots and stress areas rather than in residential locations.

The information about people referring rough sleepers to CHAIN shows that members of the public are the most frequent reporters of rough sleeping. Businesses are the 8th largest group to refer rough sleepers.

Notably, churches, some of which are known to have rough sleepers congregate around them, have reported very few rough sleepers – with just 11 reports since 2012.



	Top 5 Referrals CHAIN 2012- 2015	
1	Member of the Public	1059
2	Homelessness Agencies	996
3	Day Centre	950
4	Self	654
5	WCC Rough Sleeping Hotline	496

Note:

- These referrals are not all verified (sometimes the rough sleeper moves on / Sometimes individual is not a rough sleeper but is a beggar).
- Members of the public could be an individual who works within the rough sleepers service, reporting an incident outside of work time.

Overview of Impacts

Individuals

- Life expectancy of **42 years** (compared to national average of 74 for men, and 79 for women)
- **9 times** more likely to kill themselves
- **4 times** more likely to die from unnatural causes, such as accidents, assaults, murder, drugs or alcohol poisoning.
- More vulnerable to **assault**, particularly in the West End and from members of the general public.

Residents

- **20%** of residents think homelessness / begging is a problem
- Complaints and enquiries are received via councillors, the Police and the contact centre **weekly**
- **Regular** complaints about the volume of soup runs in the City, particularly around Strand and previously in Victoria
- Other **anecdotal impacts** include intimidation, 'no go areas', aggressive begging, concerns around drug use.

Businesses

- Most BIDs treat rough sleeping and begging as a **top priority**
- Damage to customers and reputation and physical damage to buildings
- Impacts from **soup runs**, e.g. Ryman's on the Strand deals with the daily detritus, regular reports of human faeces, vomit and litter as they open the store in the morning
- Mixed messages from businesses regarding **enforcement**

Visitors

- Many **tourists**, particularly from America and China, give significant sums of money to beggars
- **Complaints** (sometimes via the mayors office) from visitors about rough sleepers in central London
- Begging can be focused on **wealthy individuals**, often exploited during religious holidays such as Ramadan, as people felt compelled to give to individuals begging.

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LEARNING, FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

Executive summary

WESTMINSTER
HOMELESS
ACTION
TOGETHER **2016**

Context

The number of people rough sleeping in England has been rising since 2010. Westminster, as the busiest, most central London borough, experiences the highest levels of people rough sleeping in the capital. A total of 2,857 people were found sleeping rough in Westminster over the course of 2015-16. This equates to about 300 people on any given night.

The profile and landscape of homelessness has also been changing. 66% of people sleeping rough do not spend more than one night on the streets, but there has been an increase in long term chronically homeless people, usually with multiple and complex needs, as well as non-UK nationals, often with different needs and some with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

About WHAT

A partnership of agencies came together to conduct a pilot in Westminster as part of the European End Street Homelessness Campaign (EESHHC). The pilot has been led by the Connection at St Martin's (CSTM), St Mungo's and The Passage, who are commissioned by Westminster City Council (WCC) to provide services to rough sleepers in the borough; as well as the Abbey Centre, Groundswell and West London Mission bringing a different perspective.

WHAT set out to force a rethink about how to end rough sleeping in Westminster and to create a greater sense of urgency through engagement and training of the wider community to pilot a survey of people sleeping rough. WHAT partners wanted to see if the EESHHC approach could provide an opportunity for change and a rethink in how things are done.

WHAT objectives

- **Galvanise energy amongst services around doing things differently** including improving systems for getting people housed much more quickly.
- **Take a fresh look** through different eyes **and tap into new thinking and resources** eg. housing, time, energy and ongoing commitment, ideas, innovative and creative thinking about scalable solutions for migrants.
- **Raise the profile and increase understanding** of the challenges of a growing problem, not only in London but across Europe.

The partnership also wanted the pilot to influence:

- The recommissioning process taking place in Westminster for services to tackle rough sleeping over the next few years.
- The new Mayor who was about to be elected and the Greater London Authority's approach to ending street homelessness.
- Central Government's homelessness prevention work and recently announced £100K in capital funds.

European End Street Homelessness Campaign

The EESHHC is a movement of cities that are working together to permanently house Europe's most vulnerable people and end chronic street homelessness by 2020. The campaign is coordinated and supported by the Building and Social Housing Foundation (bshf.org) which helps transfer outstanding housing practices across the globe, and is drawing on learning and expertise from the successful US 100,000 Homes campaign. BSHF has provided support to London and five other cities to test the processes used in the US 100,000 Homes campaign, and see how they can be adapted in a European context. FEANTSA (www.feantsa.org), the European umbrella body for homelessness organisations, has provided a platform for its promotion and development.

Communities participating in the 100,000 Homes campaign in the US were found to rehouse chronically homeless people at a faster rate than other places. Part of the success was attributed to a 'registry week' with its emphasis on engaging the community to conduct a survey, getting to know homeless people by name and a survey tool, which assessed and prioritised vulnerabilities. The survey has also been used to monitor the needs of homeless people over time via consistent data gathering. This process underpins a Housing First approach.

Running a campaign creates a sense of urgency. And the US campaign found that new resources, solutions and fresh thinking came about through mass engagement in delivering the survey and participating in a community debrief.

WHAT methodology

- A WHAT leadership group was formed of senior representatives of the partner organisations (see above), including the City Council, and both commissioned and non-commissioned agencies, meeting regularly and committed to work together to make change.
- Getting the EESH survey off the ground within three months, by utilising the Community Solutions' agile problem solving approach to hit the ground running and 'failing forward'!

In piloting the survey, WHAT set out to explore:

- Whether engagement of the whole community could help change the way services are working to increase success in getting people housed off the streets
- Whether the survey data could add to existing knowledge and whether we could adapt survey questions to fit the London context more appropriately and increase their efficacy
- Whether additional information could be gathered about people and their experiences of services and previous interventions
- Whether this survey is the ideal starting point for prioritising vulnerability and access to housing and other services. Is its system of assessing vulnerability more effective than better use of CHAIN data

WHAT signed up to the principles of the European End Street Homelessness Campaign, which includes getting to know homeless people by name and data monitoring. Given the perceived mistrust of existing data collection systems by a proportion of homeless people, a decision was made to anonymise the survey so as to achieve wider participation. This means it is not possible to match findings to individual people sleeping rough. However, data monitoring of individuals and the stock and flow of rough sleeping is already embedded in London through the CHAIN database. Most people sleeping rough in Westminster are known by name and recorded on CHAIN and there is frequent outreach contact.

Westminster specific questions were included about needs and challenges identified within the borough so as to add value to the CHAIN data collection method.

15 women known to be sleeping rough but difficult to find at night time were also surveyed one morning but these results were not included in the overall findings due to the different methodology used. The process has, however, cemented relationships between the Pan-London Women's Outreach Network (PLWON) and services including police, transport staff and day centres concerned about female rough sleepers who hide away to keep safe and often sleep during the day in places such as churches, transport terminals and day centres.

2 Key Survey Findings

The full report places the survey findings in the context of existing knowledge from the CHAIN database and highlights new information, for example about health and about homeless people's experiences of services drawn from the Westminster additional questions. More work is being done to compare the survey findings and existing information. *NB Percentages throughout are calculated from a total which excludes those people who declined to answer, or for whom information was not recorded.*

Overview

A total of 250 people out of the 446 people encountered sleeping rough over three nights and one early morning session agreed to participate. This 56% is a high response rate but it is not possible to know if we would have achieved this if we had asked for names.

- 67 people – or almost 27% of the participants – were assessed by the survey scoring mechanism as being in the high needs category requiring long term housing and support but a key finding from this work is that 67 people in the 8+ high needs category is an underestimate. Services report it is more likely to be nearer 100.
- Nearly 59% – 147 participants – were assessed as being in the category requiring temporary supported accommodation or a hostel.

CHAIN – The Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) is a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London. CHAIN, which is commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and managed by St Mungo's, represents the UK's most detailed and comprehensive source of information about rough sleeping.

NSNO – No Second Night Out is a service and an approach to assess and support people sleeping rough for the first time to move away from the streets quickly. This prevents them becoming long term rough sleepers, and ideally not returning – "flowing" – back to the street.

- Just over 14% of people were assessed as requiring only advice or signposting, or the equivalent to the No Second Night Out offer.
- 64% of people (42) scoring 8+ were UK born; 15 people from other EU (European Union) countries including 7 from CEE (Central and Eastern European) countries.
- The relatively small number of people assessed by the survey method as having low needs only requiring advice and assessment may reflect the success of the NSNO approach in supporting around 66% of people sleeping rough off the streets quickly (as recorded by CHAIN).

Demographics

- Over 46% (114 people) surveyed were under 35, posing challenges given restrictions on the Housing Benefit room rate for under 35s.
- Nearly 4% (9 people) were over 60.
- Just over 11% (28 people) of participants were female as compared to 17% recorded on CHAIN.
- 108 people – 44% of those surveyed – were from the UK which is higher than the proportion of UK rough sleepers recorded on CHAIN in 2015/15 (32.9%).
- 84 people (34.6%) were from CEE countries including 52 people whose country of origin was Romania – the next biggest group after those from the UK (21.4%) although lower than the proportion on CHAIN in 2015/16 reflecting a downward trend which services report continues.
- 27 people (11.1%) were from other EU countries and the remaining 24 people from countries outside of the EU, over half of this group from Africa.

Needs

- 61% said they had no income of any shape or form.
- A quarter said they had chronic health issues and almost half (47%) said they avoid seeking help when not feeling well.
- More than a third (34%) had been beaten up or attacked since sleeping rough.
- Nearly a quarter hadn't been in permanent stable housing for one to two years. UK born and non EU migrants were most likely to have been on the streets for longer periods.
- 59 people hadn't had stable accommodation for over 3 – 30 years (42 UK, 4 CEE, 9 other EU, 3 Africa and one other where country of origin not recorded).
- Almost 39% of women and nearly 22% of men said homelessness had been caused by a traumatic experience.

Westminster specific questions

Responses to the set of Westminster additional questions provided new information about homeless people's experiences. This part of the survey also added to our understanding about what had gone wrong and what sort of services people say would make a difference. For example, it found that: quite a lot of people sleeping rough are working (and services deem the numbers to be even higher than identified in the survey); many are not in touch with services but want to be; and, worryingly, that over half reported that they were back on the streets having been rehoused from the streets but arrangements had broken down. This underlines the importance of supporting people to sustain their housing.

- 23 people (9.6%) were working; 7 UK; 9 CEE (4 Rumanian and 3 Polish); 3 Italian; and 3 non EU.
- About half of people said they were coming to London for economic or work reasons.
- 53.5% had been previously housed and ended up back on the streets.
- A third – 34% – said they were not in contact with any services – and of these, 72% said they wanted to be. Over 43.8% of those who haven't been in touch with services and want to be are in 26-35 age group.
- Accommodation – of varying types – was cited most frequently as the intervention that would get people off the streets (in response to an open question about this).

“Hi all, I really liked the opportunity to get involved in this project to save lives. So many people need help and I could see and feel that I can do that. I was inspired by all of you to sign up and help more. I met quite a few rough sleepers and they said how much more comfortable they were speaking with us. It was great experience. Thank you!” Volunteer

3 Learning

- Community involvement brings a fresh perspective and impetus; it raises awareness and a sense of ownership of the problem within the whole community and has the potential to deliver more ideas and resources.
- 300 volunteers expressed an interest and a diverse group of 250 signed up, undertaking the training, conducting the survey over three nights and one day and inputting the survey data; the group included people with relevant languages. The energy and ideas contributed by volunteers and within the partnership has created a sense of confidence that working together to find new and better ways of supporting people off the streets is possible.
- The approach and the partnership that developed to deliver the survey with the involvement of volunteers have succeeded in putting a spotlight on the issue and created a growing appetite for change.
- Current information gathering and use needs to be reviewed. The survey tool piloted does not add sufficient value in Westminster but the approach, including use of volunteers to conduct surveys, and the emphasis on utilising data gathered to be more effective in supporting people off the streets has illuminated changes needed.
- Efforts to rehouse the most vulnerable must be redoubled through setting targets and making sure that services are fit for purpose.

4 Conclusions

The WHAT partnership is concerned that street homelessness has been rising in Westminster and that there is a large proportion of chronically homeless people on the streets who have multiple and complex needs. The survey findings demonstrate starkly the level of risk that all people sleeping rough experience and the poverty and vulnerability they face. The current outreach model is more successful in helping those who have been on the streets for a short period but does not sufficiently meet the needs of the chronically homeless population.

Agencies in Westminster cannot take responsibility for plugging the gaps created by austerity and bureaucratic failure, for instance in the high numbers of people sleeping rough who were previously in care, the armed forces or discharged from prison with no adequate resettlement package, or in the inadequacy of benefits and their administration. Capacity within agencies is stretched due to rising needs and limited resources. The partnership however is committed to doing better – and the best it can.

The EESH survey tool did not produce revelatory findings in Westminster and WHAT partner agencies have concluded that the tool does not add sufficient value to existing data sources. The campaign approach has, however, succeeded in its aims of putting current ways

of working under a spotlight as well as raising awareness amongst and engaging the wider Westminster community. It has also cemented a much-needed partnership of commissioned and non-commissioned agencies that are committed to:

- Taking the next steps in making change to the way services for rough sleepers operate in the borough, including identifying and adopting targets for rehousing the most vulnerable, a Housing First approach and being prepared to change the way partners work to be even better in supporting and housing people.
- Continuing to support the engagement of the whole community including residents, businesses, experts by experience and a broader range of stakeholders to understand the problem and develop new solutions and help get the perspectives of other agencies that may not always be involved through the traditional case conferencing methodologies we apply.
- Reviewing how data is collected currently and how it is used to inform and improve rehousing and support packages. The survey has shone a spotlight on the need for more effective use of current CHAIN data, particularly in rehousing the most vulnerable group, estimated by services to be significantly higher than the number identified by the survey.

5 Next steps

- Consulting and testing the survey findings within partner organisations as well as volunteers and rough sleepers.
- Discuss findings with key bodies including housing providers and corporate supporters, WCC, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), London Councils and the Greater London Authority (GLA) whose support is needed to solve rough sleeping in Westminster.
- Identifying and prioritising the most vulnerable cohort by cross-referencing survey findings with CHAIN and agency information.
- Drawing in wider expertise to support development of a new strategy for tackling street homelessness in Westminster including a sustainable survey/information tool, potentially for annual use.
- Developing the framework for a road map for systems change in Westminster, which will utilise the learning to scrutinise current approaches so as to ensure activity, in particular contact time with people sleeping rough, builds trust and is as effective as possible.

“WHAT if we utilised the space, money and resources that are out there and ended rough sleeping.” Volunteer

“WHAT has made me want to do more to support people who are homeless.” Volunteer

“Together we have a louder voice. Together we can achieve more. Great experience. Thanks.” Volunteer

“More sustainable housing options. This could reduce repeat rough sleeping (hopefully).” Volunteer

“Genuine collaborative working, wonderful experience.” Partner

“Cooperative working at its best ... there was a spirit of togetherness.” Partner

The European **End Street Homelessness** Campaign



Westminster Homeless Action Together is organised by



With support from



City of Westminster



Housing, Finance & Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	7 November 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Re-Commissioning the Housing Options Service
Report of:	Rebecca Ireland, Senior Housing Needs Manager
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Housing, Regeneration, Business and Economic Development
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for Choice and Aspiration
Report Author and Contact Details:	Rebecca Ireland 2578 rireland@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

The Council first contracted out the delivery of its Housing Options Service in 2001. The service was retendered in 2007 and the contract is due to expire at the end of September 2017. Residential Management Group, part of the Places for People Group have been the provider of these services since 2001. The service incorporates the delivery of the Council's statutory housing advice, assessment and allocations services in the Borough including the prevention and management of homelessness and temporary accommodation.

The service operates within a challenging and demanding environment given the intense pressure of the local housing market, welfare reform, a changing homeless legislative environment and sustained and increasing demand for services. There is also an intense focus and regular challenge to housing assessment decisions that requires an exceptional understanding of housing law, integrity of service provision and ability to defend decisions and protect the reputation of the Council.

With the expiry of the existing contract, and the introduction of a new Rough Sleeper Strategy in 2017, the Council has an opportunity to review frontline service delivery and reshape where appropriate to place greater emphasis on:

- High quality frontline advice that actively deals with the broader range of issues that contributes to and threatens homelessness;
- Early intervention and homeless prevention;
- Greater mobile working, connectivity with other core frontline services and improved digital advice and delivery solutions to better integrate advice services offered by the Council and ensure early intervention and support where possible;
- Distinction between the 'people' services and the 'property' services' to attract specialist advice and property providers that will bring forward innovations and best practice from these sectors to deliver improved outcomes for the Council;
- Shaping a service that is better tailored to deal with single homeless people and homeless families, recognising the different complexities and requirements of each group and incorporating the learning and best practice that is available to us via the mature, third sector provision for rough sleepers and single homelessness;
- Strengthens our procurement of property capabilities to increase supply of affordable accommodation; and
- Continues to manage the quality, utilisation and income collection arrangements for our temporary accommodation stock.

Our proposal is to procure the service in four lots as follows:

Lot 1: Frontline advice, homeless prevention and support services;

Lot 2: Single person homeless services;

Lot 3: Housing assessment, allocations and nominations; and

Lot 4: Procurement and management of temporary accommodation.

The procurement of the service in 'lots' will enable us to:

- Promote competition for the contract(s) by enabling specialist and smaller providers to tender for a particular 'lot' or partner with others to provide a single solution across all 'lots';
- Secure better value for money through the re-specification of services and the competitive process;
- Explore and implement innovative and best practice solutions for service delivery, including improved digital solutions; and
- Secure additional capacity and expertise from experienced partners in terms of sourcing and procuring additional, affordable accommodation to meet borough needs and deliver longer term sustainable housing options for clients.

The purpose of this report is to inform and gain support from Housing, Finance & Corporate Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee of our overall strategy for and reshaping of the service and our intended procurement.

The Committee has recently received reports on the Supply and Allocation of Social Housing 2016/17 in March 2016 and a confirmation of the MTP target in relation to the re-procurement of this service in February 2016. There have also been regular MTP reports presented to Finance Committee.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

Policy and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and confirm the following:

1. The creation of a more agile frontline advice service that enables greater mobile working, outreach advice, collaboration and integration with other related services such as Children and Adult services, promotion of and access to employment services, in addition to promoting self-serve and digital advice solutions.
2. Support for the procurement of the service in four 'lots' that will encourage competition by appealing to experienced providers that are currently delivering specialist services within this and related sectors and encourage providers to consider the formation of partnerships and consortium arrangements to deliver the requirements of the Council.
3. Support the movement towards a partnering approach with providers that will enable the transformation of these services over time and ensure a more flexible service that can respond adequately to the changing demands and legislative framework in addition to the impacts that other broader Council initiatives such as the Integrated Customer Service, One Front Door and Digital Transformation initiatives will have on these services.
4. Support for the re-shaping of the service that forms a clearer distinction between the 'people' and 'property' aspects of the service and places greater emphasis on frontline advice, homeless prevention and self-serve solutions.

3. Background

Westminster City Council ("WCC") have a contract with Residential Management Group, part of the Places for People Group ("RMG") to deliver the Council's statutory housing advice, assessment and allocations services in the Borough and, importantly, the advice, prevention and management of homelessness and temporary accommodation. The services were first contracted out in 2001 and then again in 2007.

Our existing contract is due to expire in October 2017 and a new contract needs to be in place by 1 October 2017 to ensure the continuity of these statutory services. This paper sets out our intended re-shaping of the services and approach to the procurement of these services to ensure that we receive innovative, competitive and value for money proposals from the market to enable the continuity of statutory housing service provision within the borough, the commencement of a programme of

modernisation and transformation of services and the delivery of the agreed MTP savings.

3.1 Service characteristics and activity

The activity of the Housing Options Service in 2015/16 can be summarised as follows:

- 70,141 phone calls seeking detailed advice on housing options and housing application follow-up;
- 18,147 visits to the HOS reception at Orchardson Street;
- 1,363 housing applications received, reviewed and assessed;
- Homeless acceptances sustained at c.550 per year;
- Management of 2,500 households in temporary accommodation with the temporary accommodation requirement forecast to remain between 2,300 to 2,700;
- Active management of 2,252 rent accounts in temporary accommodation and the collection of rental income of £40m per annum; and
- Property inspections and active management of temporary accommodation providers to ensure the continued suitability and quality of temporary accommodation.

The current service is delivered from Orchardson Street with a central call centre and reception facility where people are able to access housing advice and assistance.

The very nature of the service means that it needs to be suitable for and capable of dealing with both families and individuals and appropriately tailored to those that are particularly vulnerable or complex including, but not limited to those at risk from domestic violence or suffering mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.

The assessment process is complex and requires rigorous verification of client's individual circumstances to enable an accurate and defensible assessment. Decisions are often challenged and the service needs to be equipped to undertake detailed case reviews, defend assessment decisions and protect the reputation of the Council. Frontline advisers and officers require an exceptional understanding of housing law.

There is a mature and well-equipped voluntary and charitable sector offering a wide range of complimentary support and advice, often in a more flexible and tailored environment to specific groups and individuals, where greater collaboration and joint working would achieve better and more efficient and sustainable outcomes.

With the expiry of the existing contract, the Council has an opportunity to review and reshape frontline service delivery and place greater importance and concentration on prevention. The procurement is designed to deliver a greater focus on early intervention and homelessness prevention activities such as mediation with landlords

and employers, reconnection services, employment advice and support, welfare advice and entitlement together with a genuine focus on the affordable housing options and availability of accommodation will also ensure that individuals and families are able to better assess their realistic long term sustainable housing options.

We are also taking the opportunity to make a distinction between the ‘people’ and ‘property’ services in our reshaping of the service. There is a well-developed, mature market of potential property providers that have developed solutions for the property inspection, management, lettings and rent collection requirements of the service. Typically, these providers are also well connected within the property market and can strengthen our ability to source and procure additional properties to meet our local housing needs.

The Council’s drive towards creating a digital city for all also creates a unique opportunity to improve the digitalisation of the service, offering greater opportunity for self-serve, improved mobility and outreach of the workforce including greater collaboration and integration with other key services.

In addition, the Council’s Integrated Customer Service (ICS) initiative also enables the potential shift of frontline advice services, call handling and call management to a specialist provider to drive service efficiencies and further shift the access to the Housing Options Service away from a more traditional reception facility to a more streamlined and digitally informed environment, allowing the core Housing Options Service to concentrate on effective, responsive and high quality ‘triage’, proactive homelessness prevention, tailored support and effective service pathways for the client group and the effective discharge of duty. Importantly, the new services and contract will continue to meet the Council’s statutory housing duties.

3.2 Current contract and financial parameters

We currently have a single contract with RMG at an annual cost of £4.3m that is shared between the HRA (£1.1m) and general fund (£3.2m). In addition, the Council has a limited number of additional costs associated with the contract such as the provision of IT, telephony, out of hours and legal costs. These would set to continue under the new contractual arrangements.

The MTP savings target linked to homelessness for 2017/18 are £500k, making a revised contract total of £3.8m per annum. The re-shaping and specification of the services will need to achieve the MTP savings target. We anticipate that the savings will be achieved through increased efficiency, the competitive procurement process and early and positive prevention of homelessness and discharge of duty.

3.4 Re-shaping of the service and proposed service ‘lots’

Our intention with the re-shaping of the service is to provide greater emphasis on high quality frontline ‘triage’ and advice services, that will enable early intervention, mediation and support to individuals and families to sustain their existing tenancy, identify their options for long term sustainable housing and to avoid homelessness altogether if at all possible. We envisage a frontline advice and support service that is able to deliver advice and assistance in a more flexible and mobile manner, and

from within the community rather than a reception facility within a single office. To enable this model of delivery, the IT infrastructure and digital working will need to be enabled.

More outreach advice services will better facilitate integration and sharing of information between different services e.g. adults and children services and the better utilisation of other community facilities that are frequented by those individuals and families in need of support.

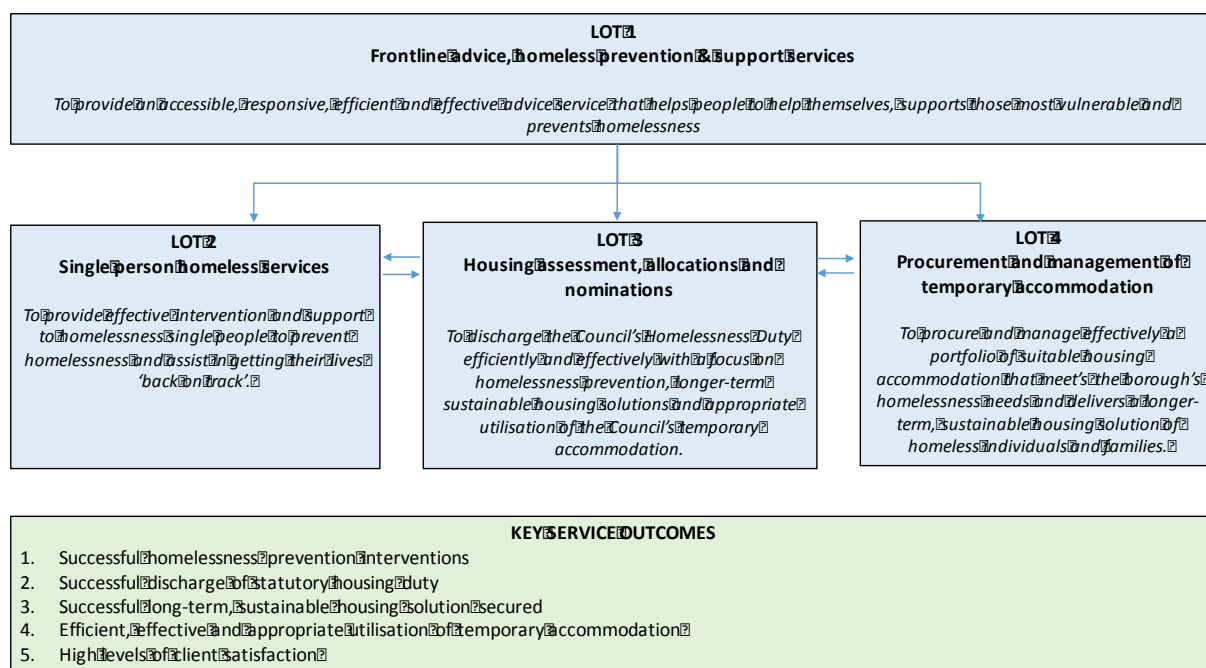
There is a well-developed and mature sector of service provision for rough sleepers and single homeless people with complex needs in Westminster, best illustrated by the facilities and service provision by our third sector providers. Recognising the strength of these providers, current services offered and identifying a separate pathway for single homeless people that come via the Housing Options Service will play well to the existing providers within the market and an opportunity to utilise existing facilities and services particularly tailored to address single homelessness in Westminster.

Our third area of service will deliver the Council's statutory housing and homelessness services including assessment, allocations and nominations to ensure the continuity of the Council's statutory housing functions. This element of the service will undertake the detailed assessment process and determine eligibility and priority for housing. As identified above, decisions are often challenged, so the service will be equipped to undertake detailed case reviews, defend assessment decisions and protect the reputation of the Council. An exceptional understanding of housing law will be a pre-requisite to this element of service provision.

The final element of the service provision relates to property related services, including the management of the Council's 2,500 stock of temporary accommodation and rent accounts and, importantly, will include an obligation for the sourcing and procurement of additional, affordable accommodation to meet borough need.

The four 'lots' proposed for the Housing Options Service are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Proposed Lots and Areas of HOS Delivery



In addition to driving the transformation of services to respond to challenges and move to a prevention-focussed service, the re-shaping of the HOS contract and services will enable us to:

- Promote competition for the contract(s) by enabling specialist and smaller providers to tender for a particular 'lot' or partner with others to provide a single solution across all 'lots';
- Secure better value for money through the re-specification of services and the competitive process;
- Explore and implement innovative solutions and best practice for service delivery, including improved digital solutions; and
- Secure additional capacity and expertise from experienced partners in terms of sourcing and procuring additional, affordable accommodation to meet borough needs and deliver longer term sustainable housing options for clients.

We have been careful to test our strategy with the market through some informal market testing during early October following the publication of a Prior Information Notice on 19th September 2016. There was a good level of interest from potential providers, with 15 organisations attending the sessions and confirming their interest in all or some of the lots. There was also a high level of support for our overall strategy and direction of travel for the service and a willingness to explore partnership working to best manage the interfaces between different providers and service lots.

There are undoubtedly some risks associated with dividing the service that will need to be effectively mitigated through the procurement process and contractual and governance arrangements that are put in place. The key ones are as follows:

- The interfaces between lots and providers need to be adequately addressed and managed through the contractual and governance obligations of the contract if there are to be different contractors for each lot.
- The Council will be required to manage four contracts rather than one necessitating effective and efficient governance, including system-generated reports, self-monitoring and appropriate Council access to verify information, undertake quality assessments and audits.
- The service will be transformed over time rather than by day 1, the services will also need to be flexible to the changing legislative landscape for homeless services and potential volatility in activities and cases e.g. Homelessness Reduction Bill. Our intention, therefore, is to adopt a partnering contract that enables the Council and providers to transform services over the term of the contract, appropriately respond to challenges within the sector and agree joint initiatives and innovations that will deliver the best outcomes for clients within the affordability parameters of the Council.

Our preference will be to have a lead contractor that partners with specialist providers to deliver high quality services across all lots and enables a single contract with the lead provider.

Further development will be required prior to launching the procurement of the HOS opportunity.

3.5 Procurement timetable and mobilisation

The timetable for the procurement of the re-shaped HOS contract is detailed in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Procurement Timetable

Stage	Milestone
PIN publication	20-Sep-16
Soft market testing	Oct-16
Launch procurement	Jan-16
Tender return	May-17
Award	Jul-17
Mobilisation period	Jul-17 to Sep-17
Contract commencement	Oct-17

It is critical that we have the new contract(s) in place by 1st October 2017 to ensure the continuity of these important frontline and statutory services. Given our existing contract with RMG, there is the need for a sufficient period of transfer between the

current and the new contractual arrangements and provider(s). A minimum period of 3 months for a realistic mobilisation for a contract of this nature. This necessitates an award in July 2017.

3.6 Next steps

The next steps for the team to implement this service re-shaping and procurement strategy are as follows:

- Gate 1 approval; and
- Finalise the procurement documentation prior to launch.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Rebecca Ireland x0000
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APPENDICES:

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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