

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2657

Evaluating the implementation of the Heat Severe Weather Emergency Protocol in London during summer 2023

Executive Summary:

Approval is sought to enter a contract of up to £15,000 to evaluate the Heat Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (H-SWEP) guidance for London. The H-SWEP guidance was updated in spring 2023, for use in summer 2023 and its implementation intends to reduce the health harms to the rough sleeping population during periods of severe hot weather.

This work, funded through the GLA's rough sleeping budget, will evaluate the effectiveness of the guidance in supporting local authorities and other services working with people sleeping rough to respond during the summer of 2023. The external evaluation, commissioned via a competitive process and to be completed no later than March 2024, will inform development of the Summer 2024 guidance.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director, Housing approves:

- expenditure of up to £15,000 to commission an external organisation to conduct an evaluation of the H-SWEP implementation that took place in London in summer 2023.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Heather Juman

Position: Assistant Director, Housing

Signature:



Date:

31/07/2023

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. Heat Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (H-SWEP) guidance for London was first issued by the GLA in summer 2022 and was updated between February and June 2023 and implemented in summer 2023. This update to the guidance was developed by the Public Health Unit and Rough Sleeping Team at the GLA, with wide stakeholder input from a task and finish group.
- 1.2. Climate change means there is a greater chance of hotter, drier summers and extreme summer weather events are likely to be the norm. People sleeping rough have a higher risk of poor health outcomes or dying during extreme heat.
- 1.3. A SWEP response during hot weather is less routine than the cold weather SWEP response and the experience in summer 2022 demonstrated that there was a need for a coordinated response across the capital. With the implementation of the recent H-SWEP guidance, there is uncertainty in relation to its effectiveness in supporting local authorities to respond to people who are sleeping rough during extreme heat.
- 1.4. Summer 2023 also saw the introduction of a new Heat Health Alert system jointly by UK Health Security Agency and the Met Office. The heat health alerts aim to flag what impact heat will have on the population. They are based on a combination of the impact the weather conditions could have on health, and the likelihood of those impacts. It is important to evaluate whether having H-SWEP aligned with the Heat Health Alert system is effective and encourages proportionate interventions for the rough sleeping population.
- 1.5. It is also noted that there is limited evidence to assess what interventions are most effective to reduce the health impact of heat on people who are rough sleeping, and the impact that H-SWEP guidance will have overall.
- 1.6. This decision therefore seeks approval of up to £15,000 expenditure from the rough sleeping core budget. The contract will be awarded to an external evaluator by competitive process and is to be considered as a 'one-off' budgetary measure to assess the effectiveness of the H-SWEP guidance in summer 2023.
- 1.7. The contract will be procured in accordance with the provisions of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- 2.1. This contract with an external evaluator will produce a process evaluation to inform future iterations of the H-SWEP guidance that was published in 2023 including:
 - a record of the frequency and duration of hot weather periods during summer 2023
 - when and what H-SWEP communications (e.g. activations, deactivations, early notifications) were sent by the GLA rough sleeping team to London councils
 - the effectiveness and proportionality of the interventions recommended by H-SWEP guidance
 - to provide insight on the impact of the H-SWEP guidance
 - ways to improve H-SWEP processes and guidance
 - resourcing or other constraints that may have prevented full implementation of the guidance.

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as public authorities, the Mayor and the GLA are subject to a public-sector equality duty and must have “due regard” to the need to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. Protected characteristics under section 149 of the Equality Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership status (all except the last being “relevant” protected characteristics).
- 3.2. Of those seen sleeping rough in 2022-23:
- 51 per cent were non-UK nationals
 - 17 per cent were women
 - 19 per cent were Black or Black British
 - 5 per cent were Roma
 - 51 per cent had a mental health need
 - most (58 per cent) were in the 26-45 age group
 - 8 per cent were under 26 years old
 - 12 per cent were over 55.
- 3.3. This evaluation may identify improvements that could benefit the health and housing outcomes of people who are rough sleeping. Although this will include a range of people, some of whom may have protected characteristics, it could also tackle health inequalities that specifically impact on people falling into inclusion health groups who experience social exclusion e.g. people who are Black or Black British, or Roma and who are over-represented in the rough sleeping population.

4. Other considerations

a) Key risks and issues

Risk description	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating action
Small market of skilled evaluators who are able to complete the project on time and to budget	High	Low	Soft market engagement will identify skilled professionals across homelessness and health sectors. The GLA has existing contacts with organisations which have previously completed evaluations in both the rough sleeping and health sphere. Competitive process to identify most appropriate candidate.
Limited data/evidence of H-SWEP impact	Medium	Low	GLA evaluation specification to detail available data and support evaluator to develop methodology for collection of required evidence where necessary.

b) Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities

- 4.1. The Mayor’s London Housing Strategy sets out the aim to provide a sustainable route off the streets for every rough sleeper in London. The Mayor’s Rough Sleeping Commissioning framework, published

in August 2021, also includes a priority to meet the health needs of people sleeping rough. As the Heat Severe Weather Emergency Protocol intends to improve the health of vulnerable Londoners (i.e. those who are rough sleeping), it is also an example of Health In All Policies work as approved by Mayoral Decision 2940.

c) *Consultations and impact assessments*

- 4.2. Mayor's Life Off the Streets taskforce has governed the review and update of the H-SWEP guidance and its development was informed by in-depth consultation with stakeholders across London including through a task and finish group of cross-sectoral experts.
- 4.3. There are no conflicts of interest to declare from those involved in the drafting or clearance of this decision form

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Assistant Director's approval is sought for revenue expenditure of up to £15,000 to commission an external organisation to conduct an evaluation of the H-SWEP implementation that took place in London in summer 2023. This will be funded from core Rough Sleeping programme's 2023-24 revenue budget. Payment is likely to fall in 2023-24 upon submission of a satisfactory report from by the organisation.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract	July/August 2023
Delivery Start Date	Late August 2023
Data collection (including survey, interviews)	September 2023
Delivery End Date	November 2023
Project Closure	November 2023

Appendices and supporting papers:

None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Sara Bainbridge has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 31 July 2023.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:

Anna Gustaf

Date:

31/07/2023