

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2804

### Rough Sleeping Winter Provision

#### Programme: Accommodation and Wider Support for Those Who Need It Most

#### Executive summary:

The GLA commissions and funds a range of services to support people sleeping rough in London. Approval is sought to spend £208,059 from the GLA rough sleeping budget to deliver Crisis at Christmas 2025-26. This includes granting:

- £116,059 to Crisis, to provide accommodation for up to 80 people
- £92,000 to St Mungo's, to deliver advice, guidance and move-on casework.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Housing Programmes and Partnerships approves granting:

- £116,059 in 2025-26 from the GLA Rough Sleeping budget to Crisis to provide accommodation for up to 80 people as part of Crisis at Christmas 2025-26
- £92,000 in 2025-26 from the GLA Rough Sleeping budget to St Mungo's to deliver advice, guidance and move-on casework as part of Crisis at Christmas 2025-26.

#### 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:** Natalie Daniels

**Position:** Assistant Director, Housing Programmes and Partnerships

**Signature:**



**Date:**

12 January 2026

## PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

### Decision required – supporting report

#### 1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. In 2024-25, outreach workers in London saw 13,231 people sleeping rough. This is a 10 per cent increase compared to 2023-24. Of those seen sleeping rough in 2024-25, 3,028 had also been seen sleeping rough in 2023-24, indicating longer-term rough sleeping. This is 27 per cent higher than the number of long-term rough sleepers seen in the previous year (i.e., across 2022-23 and 2023-24).
- 1.2. The Mayor's Rough Sleeping Plan of Action was published in May 2025. It sets out his commitment to end rough sleeping by 2030, by working with partners including central government, London Councils, boroughs and civil society. Within the plan of action, there are three initiatives that the Mayor will undertake in collaboration with partners:
  - provide leadership to bring services together and make sure people can get the help they need, as early and as simply as possible
  - prevent rough sleeping wherever possible
  - deliver rapid, sustainable routes away from the streets.
- 1.3. In August 2025, Mayoral Decision (MD) 3386 approved the establishment of, and the delivery plan for, the Accommodation and Wider Support for Those Who Need It Most programme. The Assistant Director, Housing Programmes and Partnerships, is the senior responsible owner for this work.
- 1.4. MD3386 Decision 7 states:

“where not already covered by a delegation to the Assistant Director, Housing Programmes and Partnerships in an existing Mayoral Decision, delegates authority to the Assistant Director, Housing Programmes and Partnerships (in consultation with the Executive Director for Housing and Land, the Executive Director for Communities and Skills, and the Mayoral Delivery Board), to approve expenditure funded by decisions two, three and five for delivery of the projects listed in paragraph 1.15.”
- 1.5. Paragraph 1.15 of MD3386 lists, among other projects, the Rough Sleeping Programme (GLA core budget). This was approved under MD3135.

#### *Crisis at Christmas*

- 1.6. In 2021-22 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funded a three-week extension to one of the three Crisis at Christmas hotels, via the GLA. The aim was to find longer-term move-on options for Crisis at Christmas guests; and to minimise the number of people returning to the street. St Mungo's staff were funded to provide intensive casework and move-on support; this resulted in 160 people, who would have otherwise returned to rough sleeping, receiving onwards accommodation.
- 1.7. MHCLG funded the delivery of the service again, in winter 2022-23, via the GLA. MD3043 approved receipt and expenditure of £0.54m of funding from central government. This expenditure comprised:
  - £0.30m grant to Crisis
  - £0.14m grant to St Mungo's for a team of move-on support staff
  - £0.01m for GLA staffing.

It was another successful year: 85 per cent of guests were not seen rough sleeping one month after the service closed.

- 1.8. In winter 2023-24, the Crisis at Christmas extension boosted efforts to support people out of rough sleeping. MHCLG again gave the GLA funding to deliver this project. MD3161 approved receipt and expenditure of £0.4m of funding from central government. The expenditure in 2023-24 comprised:
- £0.32m grant to Crisis
  - £0.12m grant to St Mungo's for a team of move-on support staff.
- 1.9. The 2023-24 criteria focused on individuals who were sleeping rough, and particularly hard to reach/service-resistant. This includes those in the Target Priority Group (TPG) cohort, who have extensive rough-sleeping histories (some with 10 years or more) and, often, multiple complex needs. During the 2023-24 extension period, 196 people were accommodated and offered a thorough assessment. Of these, 83 made up the service-resistant cohort, and had not accessed an offer of accommodation in the six months prior. In January 2024 it was found that only 18 per cent of those accessing the 2023-24 hotel extension were found sleeping rough. Given the successes, the same approach to target a service-resistant group was used in 2024-25.
- 1.10. In winter 2024-25, the GLA received up to £0.3m of funding from MHCLG's Rough Sleeping Initiative programme. Of this, up to £0.21m was grant-funded to Crisis, and up to £0.1m to St Mungo's, to provide hotel accommodation and specialist move-on support to people sleeping rough. During the 2024-25 extension, St Mungo's supported 104 people; 57 per cent of these had a positive planned move at the end of their hotel stay.
- 1.11. For winter 2025-26, no funding from MHCLG has been received by the GLA for Crisis at Christmas, owing to the lack of a 'winter monies' allocation at a regional level. However, given the project's success in previous winters, and its importance in tackling rough sleeping in London, funding will be provided from the GLA's rough sleeping budget.
- 1.12. This ADD seeks approval to spend up to £0.21m from the GLA rough sleeping budget. Of this, up to £0.09m will be grant-funded to St Mungo's, and up to £0.12m to Crisis, to provide hotel accommodation; and security and specialist move-on support.

## **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

### *Crisis at Christmas*

- 2.1. Crisis at Christmas provides three hotels for people sleeping rough over the festive period. Each hotel is designed to provide respite, dignity and tailored support, with a strong emphasis on move-on planning and engagement with services. The extension hotel is part of Crisis's expanded Christmas accommodation initiative. This pan-London offer is specifically designed to support people who are sleeping rough and have been resistant to engaging with services – particularly those who have been sleeping rough for at least six months. Referrals are open to all London boroughs, and priority is given to those either identified through data from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN); or nominated by partners as part of a hard-to-reach cohort. The aim is to use the Christmas period as a unique opportunity to engage people who typically do not access mainstream support.
- 2.2. The key performance indicators for the Crisis at Christmas project focus on ensuring positive outcomes for guests; and preventing returns to rough sleeping. Specifically, the project aims for no immediate return to the streets after the service closes; and achieving successful outcomes such as accommodation or reconnection. Fewer than 15 per cent of the cohort should abandon the hotel; and all non-UK rough sleepers must receive immigration advice. Additional measures track short- and long-term accommodation moves; unplanned departures; reconnections; and instances of rough sleeping within one, three and six months.
- 2.3. This ADD seeks approval to spend up to £0.21m, from the GLA Rough Sleeping budget, on the Crisis at Christmas extension hotel, running from 22 December 2025 to 21 January 2026. St Mungo's will

provide move-on support to 100 people, and the funding to Crisis will provide accommodation provision to 80 people.

### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Mayor and the GLA must comply with the public sector equality duty (PSED) and must have due regard for the need to:
  - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
  - foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 3.2. The 'protected characteristics' are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of the requirements to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination), race (ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.3. Consideration of the PSED is not a one-off task. The duty must be fulfilled before taking a decision, at the time of taking a decision, and after the decision has been taken, to ensure that equalities impacts are kept under ongoing review.
- 3.4. The Rough Sleeping Plan of Action has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (referenced in paragraph 3.7 of the Accommodation and Wider Support for Those Who Need It Most Delivery Plan). Headline insights include the following:
  - Just under half of people rough sleeping in London in 2023-24 had a mental health support need (48 per cent); 56 per cent had an alcohol or drug-related support need; and 30 per cent had more than one support need related to alcohol, drugs and mental health.
  - Homelessness and housing insecurity disproportionately affect people from Black and minority ethnic communities. Research has highlighted how direct acts of racism, racial discrimination and institutional racism contribute to homelessness.
  - In 2023-24, 4.7 per cent of people seen sleeping rough in London were of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller ethnicity. The vast majority of these were of a Roma background specifically (4.3 per cent of all people seen sleeping rough). This compares to 0.004 per cent of London's general population identifying as Roma in the 2021 Census.
  - Non-UK nationals have consistently represented approximately half of all people seen rough sleeping in London. In 2023-24, 45 per cent of people rough sleeping in London were UK nationals.
  - In 2023-24, 84 per cent of people recorded as sleeping rough (by CHAIN) were male; and 16 per cent were female. However, women are typically underrepresented in traditional rough-sleeping statistics; this due to the (often) less visible ways in which women sleep rough, compared to men.
- 3.5. Crisis at Christmas is expected to have a positive impact in improving equalities. The service will do so by supporting the delivery of rapid sustainable routes away from the streets – one of the key priorities of the Mayor's Rough Sleeping Plan of Action.
- 3.6. Crisis will work closely with London boroughs to identify those who will benefit most from this intervention; and will prioritise a service-resistant cohort, including TPG. This group comprises people

who typically decline engagement with mainstream homelessness services, but may respond to the distinctive offer of Crisis at Christmas. They are predominantly individuals with entrenched rough sleeping histories and multiple, complex needs, such as mental health and/or drug and alcohol needs.

#### 4. Other considerations

##### *Key risks and issues*

4.1. The key risks associated with the decisions in this ADD are outlined in the table below:

<b>Risk description</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Insufficient staff capacity within St Mungo's to successfully deliver the project.	High	Low	St Mungo's has a robust locum bank to recruit temporary workers to support the Crisis at Christmas workload.  Experienced assessment and reconnection (A&R) workers are needed, so locum workers can also backfill the No Second Night Out hub staff teams whilst A&R workers are deployed to the extension hotel.
Limited mobilisation time to communicate and prepare specialist support services, housing options teams and service delivery.	High	Medium	The GLA has set up a kick-off meeting with St Mungo's, who will organise regular meetings with Crisis to coordinate mobilisation.  St Mungo's will engage sub-regional coordinators, the GLA and London Councils in operational meetings to support move-on.  This service has a history of delivery; and operational managers across Crisis and St Mungo's have established relationships and procedures that can be mobilised.
Not enough demand for service resistance cohort referrals.	High	Medium	The GLA has invited Crisis to each sub-regional meeting, to promote the extension offer with local authority leads.  The GLA has organised a meeting, specific to outreach managers, for Crisis to promote the extension offer.  St Mungo's will be able to refer service-resistant people from pan-London services if bed spaces are not being used.
Insufficient uptake of the service from the target cohort.	High	Medium	Crisis will keep its referral portal open for the TPG cohort, providing ongoing access for those who are hesitant to engage. They are also offering flexibility on bed use, allowing people in the cohort to come in at any time without the requirement to stay every night.  The London Navigator team will start preparing people on their caseload ahead of the hotel opening. They will do so by sharing photos of the hotel, and arranging visits to help build familiarity and encourage uptake.

### *Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities*

4.2. The planned activity outlined in this decision is part of the Accommodation and Wider Support for Those Who Need it Most programme. This programme contributes to the core London-level outcomes:

- Londoners are not homeless
- Londoners live in homes they can afford
- Londoners are treated fairly and with dignity.

Specifically, this activity helps provide rapid, sustainable routes away from the streets for people who are rough sleeping (section 1.2 of the Accommodation and Wider Support for Those Who Need it Most programme delivery plan, Appendix 2 of MD3386). The planned activity also supports delivery of the following Mayoral strategies:

- The Mayor's Housing Strategy, including the key aims to tackle homelessness and help rough sleepers.
- The Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, which sets out the strategic objective to work with government, councils, the voluntary sector and communities to ensure rough sleepers are helped off the streets as quickly and sustainably as possible.
- The Mayor's Rough Sleeping Plan of Action, which sets out a new approach to:
  - rough-sleeping prevention
  - increased systems leadership for a 'no wrong door approach'
  - scaling up targeted routes off the streets for those facing additional barriers.

### *Consultations*

4.3. In developing the Rough Sleeping Plan of Action, the GLA engaged over 90 stakeholders across different sectors through consultation events and a call for evidence. In addition, a Lived Experience Advisory Group – made up of individuals with personal experience of homelessness and rough sleeping – were consulted on the Plan of Action. This included through testing principles and interventions. The feedback from these organisations and individuals has informed the development of the Plan of Action.

### *Conflicts of interest*

4.4. There are no known conflicts of interest for those involved in the drafting or clearance of this report.

## **5. Financial comment**

5.1. The Assistant Director's approval is sought for expenditure of £208,059 in 2025-26 from the GLA's 2025-26 Core Rough Sleeping budget. The expenditure is to be spent across two areas, as per the below table:

<b>Budget and funding</b>	<b>Crisis</b>	<b>St Mungo's</b>	<b>Total</b>
GLA 2025-26 Rough Sleeping budget	£116,059	£92,000	£208,059

5.2. These funding and programmes are managed by the Rough Sleeping team, part of the Specialist Housing services unit within Housing and Land.

## 6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

6.1. The planned delivery approach for the intervention within this ADD is set out in the table below:

Activity	Timeline
Grant funding agreement drafted with St Mungo's	15 December 2025
Grant funding agreement drafted with Crisis	15 December 2025
Crisis at Christmas starts	22 December 2025
Two sites close, and the extension period begins	1 January 2026
The extension period ends	21 January 2026

### 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 be published either within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

### Strategic Programmes

**Does this decision seek approval for activity falling within the remit of a programme delivery plan? YES**

If YES, which programme/s does this fall within: Accommodation and Wider Support for Those Who Need it Most

### 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 the 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:

Philippa Markley has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

#### Mayoral Delivery Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Mayoral Delivery Board on 12 January 2026.

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

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

**Signature**



**Date**

12 January 2026