

Life Off The Streets Core Group

Minutes of meeting held on 10 May 2022

In attendance

LHDG, London Housing Directors' Group – Jamie Carswell (Chair)
GLA, Greater London Authority - David Eastwood, Luke Oates
LC, London Councils - Michelle Binfield, Gareth Williams (Minutes)
NHS HLP, Healthy London Partnership – Jemma Gilbert
DLUHC, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities – Tom Preest
SM, St Mungo's – Petra Salva
HL, Homeless Link – Pete Smith, Chris Dutton
LA, Local Authorities - Chris Pelham (City of London), Paul Davis (Lambeth), Mark Billings (Hillingdon)
HJ, Housing Justice – Kathy Mohan

In attendance for specific sections

Women's rough sleeping item - Eleanor Greenhalgh (Women's Development Unit) and Lucy Campbell (SHP)
NSNO item – David Orton
Hospital discharge item - Caroline Shulman, Tim Gray, JJ Nadicksbernd

Apologies for Absence

GLA, Greater London Authority - Debra Levison, Emma De Zoete
LC, London Councils - Eloise Shepherd
SM, St Mungo's - Liz McCulloch
LA, Local Authorities - Gill Taylor (Haringey)
LP, London Probation - Karen Tipping

1) Welcome and introductions

Jamie welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

A minute's silence was offered to mark the untimely and tragic passing of our dear colleague, Steve Douglas.

2) Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting (15 March 2022)

The minutes were approved as an accurate account of the meeting.

Michelle noted that the planned joint meeting with the Rough Sleeping and Home Office Ministers is now booked for June 15th.

Michelle also noted that there is ongoing work regarding Social Care with agreement from ADASS to join the Executive Board and discussions about the partnership work that is needed.

On the action to write to Exec Board about the risks around the ending of P&V funding, boroughs have been able to carry on more of their placements than was expected, mostly using non-recurrent underspend. However, the risk still needs to be included in the risk register and flagged to the Executive Board. This remains a key risk under review to manage. The data return will show the impact of the placements that have been lost so far.

3) Hospital Discharge and Homeless Health workstream update

This section was presented by Jemma Gilbert, Caroline Shulman, JJ Nadicksbernd and Tim Gray of the NHS Healthy London Partnership. Please see the slide deck for detail.

Caroline Shulman outlined the information currently known about the population of those currently discharged, or at risk of discharge, to homelessness. The population has complex needs, often physical, mental and substance misuse via multiple conditions. Many have care needs or represent safeguarding concerns. Around 19% have NRPF. Most of these individuals come from temporary accommodation, hostels, sofa-surfing, the streets, etc.

Good progress has been made in developing a housing options directory where NHS Staff can be kept up to date with contact details and referral processes for housing options in support of the Duty to Refer process and in

the hope of achieving better discharge outcomes. Some of the data needs refining and Michelle and Gareth from London Councils are working to update the directory information.

Noted that the mystery shopper work starting this week will show whether housing options services function as they are meant to.

Tom Preest also asked if the directory also included the Rough Sleeping leads details in the Boroughs.

Action: Gareth to provide Rough Sleeping lead contacts in boroughs for the directory.

Tim explained that there are frequently misunderstandings and mismatched expectations whilst trying to move individuals out of hospital. The aim of this workstream is to create more capacity in general, more understanding of what works and a clear model of how to follow the new NICE guidelines.

Jamie noted that the core issue is often one of relationship building and effective communication across boroughs, and between rough sleeping and healthcare teams.

David Eastwood stated that the audit that had been undertaken by health colleagues was welcome but a huge piece of work. He asked whether there was any way to work on improving the use of hospital coding to ensure there was real time data, rather than repeating the audit periodically. He also noted that there may be quick wins available, such as hostels and in-reach support being funded again.

Tom Preest noted that the system prioritises rough sleeping as a route into services; something could be done to help an agreed cohort before they slept rough.

Michelle Binfield suggested that the hospital coding issue might end up being a distraction – perfecting it will take a long time to fix and may potentially never be completed. She also noted that the issue is not about generic housing need and/or poor housing but the need to prevent rough sleeping – ie: better identifying the subset of people who may go on to sleep rough.

Jamie stated that the directory needed to have named contacts in ICPs, and the Core Group needed to be assertive about getting those named contacts in order to create a community of practice. Michelle Binfield also noted that the importance of including a named social care lead as well. The interaction between housing needs and social care continues to be a problem. Paul Davis offered to help with conversations around adult social care. Chris Pelham was more cautious, noting the pressures for adult social care. He stated that relationships need to be built and good governance replicated from elsewhere.

Jemma Gilbert responded to these above points. She stated that a sustained commitment is needed to fund social care. She agreed with Michelle in regards that updated coding will never be perfect, but that it is important to promote positive behaviours. Jemma also noted that the role of this group and the ICPs is to promote the sort of systems leadership being discussed, to see what works.

It was agreed that quite often the rough sleeping sector is not good at showing other stakeholders what can be achieved for a relatively low overall expenditure.

Peter Smith asked whether the A&E Directory is joined up with the Atlas of London's Homelessness Services – probably a different intention but Gareth will check relevance.

The Homeless Health workstream will also present an update on work more generally to the LOTS Executive Board on May 24th.

4) Pan London Substance Misuse Programme

Please see the separate paper, circulated before the meeting.

David Eastwood noted that the inpatient detox service for rough sleepers (at Guys and St Thomas's) is working very well, but there are too few referrals and too many voids. It is not clear why the resource is being underused, but work is underway to better understand it. It's possible the referral standards need adjusting (eg: too much focus on abstinence vs maintenance) or that some SM teams aren't clear enough about the offer.

Jamie agreed the importance of making certain use of the precious resource and pathways that exist, and that the ongoing challenge will be to make sure that conversations are occurring at the right place in the system. He stated that links need to be built between Rough Sleeping and Public Health to reduce gatekeeping, especially given the costs of the treatment.

Petra questioned whether it was true that the reason for the blockages were not known, but rather that this knowledge was informal rather than collated or evidenced properly. She asked whether it was possible for providers such as St Mungo's or others to provide evidence to help with this, or perhaps it would be a good idea to survey local outreach teams. David Eastwood stated that he would be happy with either of those ideas. David noted that it would be important to look at the areas where we would expect a high volume of referrals to come from, but which are not.

Action: David Eastwood and Petra to meet to discuss how to review Pan London Substance Abuse referrals.

Jemma Gilbert told the meeting that her team are interviewing today for the new Drug and Alcohol team at HLP, a post for each ICP to lead on developing dual diagnosis services. One Senior Leader will work across London to develop the strategic approach. Whilst there is currently only one year of funding, Jemma anticipates that this will be embedded into NHS Structures in ICPs ongoing. David reported that the GLA will soon have a post to look at treatment access for those with limited entitlement.

Jamie finished by stating that the Core Group will need to challenge stakeholders to risk more referrals, so resources can be properly used.

5) Women's rough sleeping workstream update

Eleanor Greenhalgh and Lucy Campbell presented work from the Women's rough sleeping workstream. Please refer to the attached presentation document (including an embedded video of a personal testimonial).

The speakers summarised that the approach to women's rough sleeping needs to change because (i) women are under-represented in statistics and provision due to system bias, (ii) the 'near universal' experiences of violence and abuse women face on the streets, and (iii) that women have an even lower average age of death on the streets than men (41 compared to 45). Women need to be approached as specific cohort, in the way other cohorts have specialist support. The workstream set out its key aspirations in the presentation, beginning with improving the accuracy of statistics regarding women's rough sleeping.

The workstream presented three key asks to the Core Group initially: (i) a new sub-indicator for women (in line with the new work being undertaken in DLUHC) seeking to specifically monitor rough sleeping by women and commit to end it, (ii) a commitment to a pan-London women's street count/census with an adjusted methodology that better reflects women's patterns of rough sleeping and (iii) widening verification and data sources to better account for hidden patterns of rough sleeping, including allowing/capturing self-verification and increasing the pool of organisations adding to CHAIN.

Paul Davis commented that he would be happy to meet with Eleanor and Lucy, to work with them to pilot work within Lambeth. Lucy Campbell welcomes this offer of assistance.

David Eastwood noted that these proposals would involve a major change in CHAIN, since the issue of altering verification would be a big change to this system.

Jemma Gilbert noted equalities and legal duties for equity, across all indicators. There are strong links on domestic violence and violence towards women and girls, young people and mental health. It is important to consider what the approach is to equity across all the indicators.

Michelle agreed that the work stream is valuable as women are very vulnerable when rough sleeping. The Core Group probably need to state that no women should ever sleep rough, due to the danger of violence. Verification is a huge issue, but also that often current services lack safe spaces for women. To understand the problem and therefore needs, there needs to be proper data capture via a women's street count/census.

Peter Smith agreed with the overall strategy, and Michelle's comments. He offered to help via the resources that Homeless Link possess.

Tom Preest questioned what the overall objective of the workstream was – whether the aim is to campaign for more services for those that are homeless but not rough sleeping. Lucy Campbell responded that the focus of the workstream is on invisible rough sleeping of women, not hidden homelessness, and the aim to broaden the reach of street outreach. Tom Preest suggested that the slides could be made clearer on that point. Lucy agreed.

Petra Salva noted that a focus on T1000 would find the reasons for invisibility within those 1000. This could be a place to start and show the results. Petra noted a survey completed in Westminster regarding women's rough sleeping. Petra will pass on the methodology and the survey to avoid missing any information in this new work. Petra also noted the overrepresentation of women using Streetlink, and that data will need to be used as part of any count/census.

Jamie noted the importance of altering the survey approach to be clearer on finding women rough sleeping. The Core Group agreed the key recommendations and asked that relevant officers take the work forward.

6) Kerslake Update

Due to Liz being unable to attend, it was agreed that this item would be brought back to the next meeting.

7) NSNO Changes/Plans

David Orton presented to the group, please see the attached slides.

NSNO had to transition to a Covid-safe model which had reduced capacity. There are now plans to scale up to all three hubs being open 24/7. Currently, there are pilots open in the east hub only.

The only comment or question from colleagues was from Jemma Gilbert, who offered any available help on health input for the hubs.

8) Data Return and Date Review Update

There is no data return ready for this meeting. Local elections and other changes have meant that some Boroughs have not hit the deadline for their data.

The data return has moved to bi-monthly now. There has been advanced work with DLUHC to share management information from the DELTA system so that we are in a position to remove most data that London Councils collects to avoid duplication between data for DLUHC and London Councils. London Councils will continue to collect Immigration Status Data, which DELTA does not collect currently collect. From May, DELTA will collect some immigration data, but with less granularity than London Councils data.

Separately, the work with CHI and DLUHC on the new Rs indicator set is continuing apace, following on from the workshop held recently for the Core Group. The indicators are to be trialled over the next 6-9 month. There is a separate data group to look at the data definitions, what systems exist and what needs to be done to collect the data that is not already held. CHI, London Councils and GLA are planning a briefing session for London LAs on 31.5.22 and there is a national gathering for all English LAs to hear more about the work on 7.6.22 – Jamie has been asked to chair this.

On May 4th there was a session with Bloomberg and LOTI to look at the improvements we are seeking to make to the London data architecture in support of ending rough sleeping – with a focus on creating better access to prevention and hostels data and providing commissioners and service managers with good cohort level reporting data. This is operating outside the work of DLUHC and CHI, although it is aware of that work. London has an ambition to improve data collection to also improve prevention, joining up information such as hotel outreach. An update will be brought to the next Core Group meeting. This work will be piloted in some local authorities such as Westminster, Hillingdon, Greenwich and potentially a few more.

David Eastwood noted that London will be far ahead of other parts of the country in data infrastructure, so there may be an ongoing risk that London has more robust data that also accordingly appears to be performing worse through capturing more data about who is on the streets.

9) Programme Update

Programme risk register and work plan updated and circulated.

Some risks have been reduced due to the decline of severe weather and Covid-19. Some further risks have been added/added to regarding the pan London programme, Ukraine and the end of P&V programme. The documents will continue to be used and updated. Comments can be sent to Michelle or David.

10) Items for Next Executive Board

The next executive board will be held on the afternoon of May 24th. Eddie Hughes, the Minister for Rough Sleeping and Housing will attend for 45 minutes.

The intention of the meeting will be to discuss strategy and consultation areas, such as prevention, complex needs and ending restricted eligibility. It will be a valuable opportunity to show that the London programme is working well and achieving success but highlight the challenges that remain.

The other main item for the board will be the Homeless Health Workstream, which will take the bulk of the remaining time.

Beverly Tarka has agreed to join the Executive Board from Haringey as an ADASS rep but cannot attend the meeting in May.

11) AOB

Luke Oates presented the CHAIN neutrality protocol, which can be found attached with these minutes. This protocol was originally set up when St Mungo's became the provider to provide oversight. From April 1st, CHAIN will be provided by Homeless Link, so the neutrality statement needs to be updated. Please provide any feedback can be provided via correspondence.

12) Dates of Next Meetings

The next Executive Board will be held on May 24th 2022 from 2-3.30pm

The next Core Group meeting will be held on June 28th from 3-4.30pm

Outstanding actions

Date Originated	Action Owner	Action	Latest Updates
10.05.22	Gareth Williams	Gareth to work with HLP on updating the directory and adding in the RS leads contact details	Outstanding
10.05.22	David Eastwood, Petra Salva	David and Petra to meet to discuss reasons for low level of Pan London Substance Abuse referrals.	To be updated.
24.2.22	Michelle	Briefing for Housing Directors on using safeguarding panels to make the case for action around vulnerable rough sleepers	Will be picked up via the joint work with ADASS and London Housing Directors
24.2.22	Michelle David Petra	Resurrect the project on providing high support beds for non UK rough sleepers in hostels/supported housing	Meeting set up to take forward
24.2.22	Michelle	Set up new prevention workstream involving Petra, Jo, David, Emma and develop outline action plan	Meeting set up to take forward
24.2.22	Michelle Tamiru	Look at recommendations from Bloomberg event and ensure they are embedded in LOTS programme plan as appropriate	First meeting has occurred; more work planned
24.2.22	Michelle David Petra	Ensure better join up between the NSNO data on flow and CHAIN and review the data categories around flow	Meeting set up to take forward