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| REPORT TO: | CABINET 26 July 2021 |
| SUBJECT: | Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund 2021-22 (RSI4) |
| LEAD OFFICER: | Alison Knight Executive Director, Housing Julia Pitt, Director, Gateway Services |
| CABINET MEMBER: | Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice, Cabinet Member for Homes |
| WARDS: | All |

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2024

The RSI programme helps to address all the Councils's priorities:

- We will live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents. – *grant funding secured enables the Council to enhance and increase services provided to tackle rough sleeping, address the support needs of rough sleeping and reduce demand on a range of Council services.*
- We will focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough. We will follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic injustice. – *rough sleeping is one of the most evident outcomes of inequality, one of the most basic needs of our residents' has not been met. Rough sleepers have an extremely low life expectancy, and average age of 43.*
- We will focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford. First and foremost, providing social care services that keep our most vulnerable residents safe and healthy. And to keep our streets clean and safe. To ensure we get full benefit from every pound we spend, other services in these areas will only be provided where they can be shown to have a direct benefit in keeping people safe and reducing demand. - *In the [2015 Hard Edges](#) report, the costs of rough sleeping to the public purse were calculated to be between £14,300 and £21,200 per person per year. The higher cost being incurred if rough sleeping occurred alongside substance misuse and offending. This is 3 to 4 times the average cost to public services of an average adult (approximately £4,600). Securing grant funding for services to reduce rough sleeping, helps to reduce demand on our core services. However, MHCLG have stressed in conditions of funding that RSI funding is designed to build on existing local rough sleeping services and should not be used to substitute existing support offers.*

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Council has been allocated a total of £1,703,733 RSI funding in 2021-22 to fund specific interventions set out in the detail of the report. The funding will be received in two tranches:

Tranche 1, received April 2021. This represented continuation funding for 1/4/2021 – 30/6/2021 of £329,158, at the same level as 2020-21 RSI funding, plus an uplift of £130,000 uplift to enable the Council to continue to provide accommodation and move on for rough sleepers accommodated as a result of the pandemic.

Tranche 2 was confirmed in May 2021; the funding cycle was delayed by delivery of

the response to the pandemic. This funding will be paid in autumn 2021, on receipt of a projection of spend for the remainder of the year and confirmation from the Council's s151 officer that funding has been spent as set out in the award letter. Underspend of £152,619 will be deducted from this tranche, leaving a balance of £1,551,114 to be paid.

Any interventions funded will be contained within the funding envelope and no match-funding or additional administration costs are required to accept and manage the funding. Successful outcomes will reduce future costs arising from repeat homelessness, and associated costs to the public purse from rough sleeping.

In the [2015 Hard Edges report](#), the costs of rough sleeping to the public purse were calculated to be between £14,300 and £21,200 per person per year. The higher cost being incurred if rough sleeping occurred alongside substance misuse and offending. This is 3 to 4 times the average cost to public services of an average adult (approximately £4,600).

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO: This is not a key decision

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the contents of this report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 This report is to inform Cabinet of the Rough Sleeping Initiative Grant 2021-22,.

2.2 The Rough Sleeping Initiative Grant supports the Council's priorities, enhancing the Council's ability to prevent and relieve rough sleeping, avoiding the cost to the public purse of long term rough sleeping, and addressing the inequality experienced by these very vulnerable residents.

2.3 The report informs Cabinet of the context of the Rough Sleeping Initiative Grant, aims and expected outcome and sets out the grant allocation.

2.4 The Council has secured £1.7m in Rough Sleeping Initiative Grant funding in 2021-22.

3 Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund

3.1 Rough Sleeping in Croydon

3.1.1 Rough sleeping is quantified on a statutory basis through annual rough sleeping counts or estimates, using [MHCLG methodology](#) and externally

verified. Croydon has seen a steady reduction in the numbers found during rough sleeping counts since 2017, when the Council moved from an estimate to count methodology, with 31 rough sleepers found November 2017, 15, 6 and 15 found in subsequent years. More detailed data on rough sleeping is recorded in the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) database, commissioned by the GLA and used by outreach services. Croydon rough sleepers recorded on CHAIN increased from 234 to 306 between 2017 and 2020. Croydon's most significant challenges are the "flow" of new rough sleepers, Croydon and Redbridge have the highest numbers of new rough sleepers of outer boroughs, and rough sleepers who are living on the streets. Croydon has the highest number, with Redbridge having two fewer. Three quarters of rough sleepers had support needs relating to alcohol, drugs or mental health in 2019/20, with 44% having more than one support need recorded.

3.1.2 Two key factors may impact on rough sleeping during 2021-22; lifting of the ban on evictions from the private sector, and the risk that EU nationals who are rough sleeping will miss the "window" to secure settled or pre-settled status. Meanwhile the "flow" of new rough sleepers has continued during the first quarter of 2021-22,

3.2 The **Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund** was launched in 2018, following publication of the Government's [Rough Sleeping Strategy](#). This is the fourth annual funding round that the Council has been successful in securing.

3.2.1 The key objectives of the current funding round are to:

- > ensure that as few people as possible return to streets from emergency accommodation put in place during COVID-19. As COVID-19 remains a health risk, it is also essential that people, particularly those who are at increased risk of severe illness, are kept safe;
- > continue to ensure a response to those who remain or arrive on the streets who are at risk of Covid-19;
- > ensure longer-term accommodation and support solutions for those already in a rough sleeping pathway – enabling them to move on to independent living; and
- > free up spaces in hostels so that supported accommodation is available for those that need it.

3.2.2 Key outcomes include the following with those in bold the key measures adopted by MHCLG:

- 1. Maximise the number of individuals identified as sleeping rough and ensure their needs are assessed (completed Personalised Housing Plans)**
- 2. Increase in the number of known individuals with a tailored service offer.**
- 3. Increase in the number of individuals supported through the RSI who sustain their tenancies beyond 6 months**
- 4. Increase in the number of individuals identified as "at risk" prevented from rough sleeping**
 - > access to affordable accommodation;
 - > improved mental and physical health, well-being and resilience;

- > greater financial inclusion; engagement with treatment, for those with substance misuse needs;
- > engagement with employment, education, training, volunteering or meaningful activity; and
- > move-on to fully independent living.

3.2.3 The 2021-22 funding round was simplified by MHCLG, the Councils bid was created through a two stage co-production exercise, initially with key internal and external partners and, subsequently with the MHCLG Rough Sleeping Advisory Team which oversees deliver of the programme.

3.2.4 **Funding allocation:** the table below sets out the funding allocation 1 July 2021 – 31/3/2022 (outcomes key below):

| Title | Intervention | RSI outcomes and objectives | Existing or new | Cost |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------|----------|
| Rough Sleeping Coordinator | Coordinates rough sleeping response across the Council and ensures delivery of RSI programme. | 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b | Existing | £48,272 |
| Housing First | Intensive housing related support for 20 complex need rough sleepers who live on the streets or rough sleep intermittently operating on Housing First principles and preventing their return to rough sleeping. | 1b, 2a | Existing | £130,541 |
| Somewhere Safe to Stay assessment hub | Direct access short-stay accommodation hub for rough sleepers. Now includes provision for nightly let bookings owing to loss of shared bedspaces. Works with 15 rough sleepers at any one time. | 1a, 1b, 2b | Existing/ New | £394,690 |
| Complex Needs Navigator | Sustains complex need rough sleepers in nightly let accommodation and supports transition into longer term accommodation. Works intensively with a caseload of 12 rough sleepers who have lived on the streets or have rough slept intermittently preventing their return to | 1b, 2a | Existing | £35,010 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------|----------|----------|
| | the streets by finding tailored solutions. | | | |
| Rough sleeping Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) officer (2FTE) | Funds two additional Housing Needs Officers within the Single Homelessness Team enabling rapid assessment of homelessness duties, a coordinated response and a streamlined pathway from the streets. | 1a, 2b, 2a, 2b | Existing | £70,020 |
| Prison discharge navigators (2FTE) | Provide a “Through the Gate” response to prison referrals through “Duty to Refer”, assessing prisoners at risk of rough sleeping prior to release and ensuring accommodation on release. | 2b | New | £81,690 |
| Winter coordinator – Community Engagement Officer | To deliver the Council’s cold weather response and support successful delivery and mobilisation across the programme | 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b | New | £38,699 |
| Private Sector access | To fund interventions to increase PRS access for low needs rough sleepers, and for rough sleepers moving on from supported accommodation. Secure up to 66 privately rented tenancies | 1b, 2b | Enhanced | £150,000 |
| Discretionary Personalisation Fund | Enables services to find individualised solutions to rough sleeping. Funds reconnections, clothes, furnishings, access to ID etc. | 1b, 2a, 2b | Enhanced | £150,000 |
| Lead Navigator | Coordinates and delivers multi-agency response to long term and intermittent rough sleeping resulting from complex need. | 1b, 2a | New | £48,272 |
| Legal Advice Fund | To assist non UK rough sleepers to access support to resolve immigration status. | Repurpose? See 3.2.7 | New | £35,000 |
| Employment support for rough sleepers | To support rough sleepers to access employment | Repurpose? See 3.2.7 | New | £45,000 |

3.2.5 Outcomes key:

| Outcome reference | Outcome |
|-------------------|--|
| 1a | Maximise the number of individuals identified as sleeping rough and ensure their needs are assessed (completed Personalised Housing Plans) |
| 1b | Increase in the number of known individuals with a tailored service offer. |
| 2a | Increase in the number of individuals supported through the RSI who sustain their tenancies beyond 6 months |
| 2b | Increase in the number of individuals identified as “at risk” prevented from rough sleeping |

3.2.6 RSI4 funding is subject to a number of **principles** covering homelessness assessments, reducing numbers in emergency accommodation, offering safe and appropriate accommodation, reducing the numbers at risk of, and sleeping rough, tenancy sustainment, partnership working, service user participation and ensuring that support offered to non-UK nationals complies with legal restrictions.

Delivery is overseen by the MHCLG Rough Sleeping Advisory Team through regular meetings with key staff. An internal Grant Delivery and Development group including key Gateway, Homelessness and Finance officers will provide internal oversight and governance on delivery.

3.2.7. There are occasions where the team negotiates with MHCLG to re-purpose the grant. Some of the intended uses of the grant may become less relevant or barriers to mobilization may arise. Pan-London legal advice and employment services for rough sleepers have been launched since the funding submission was made and continuing with these services would duplicate these existing services. The team has submitted a request to repurpose the MHCLG funding for these services to deliver two pilots:

- > A further complex needs street outreach worker to work intensively with rough sleepers who are becoming entrenched owing to their lack of engagement in the solutions offer. Their role will bridge both support and enforcement services to ensure that enforcement is taken where necessary but is proportionate and aligned with an ongoing offer of support.
- > A dedicated rough sleeper social worker pilot. This was bid for in the original funding submission.

MHCLG are considering these requests.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 RSI funding proposals have been developed through a process of co-production with key internal and external partners. Partners are consulted on the effectiveness of existing interventions, needs and gaps in services as well as emerging trends. An initial draft proposal is developed with the Council's RSI adviser based on this consultation.
- 4.2 This process was abbreviated in this funding round, owing to the short timescale between prospectus and funding submission date. Partners were invited to a discussion as well as to submit views by email. The team consulted key voluntary sector partners Croydon Crisis Skylight, Evolve Housing & Support, Thames Reach, Turning Point, the SLaM START team, homelessness assessment service, DWP and the homeless health forum.

5 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 5.1 This report is for information only and not a decision.

6 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This funding and the associated terms of spending have been agreed with MHCLG. No additional match funding is required to accept the grant and all costs of administering the grant to be met from the grant funding. No commitment is given by MHCLG about the level of ongoing funding for this work which translates to limited security for posts funded from this grant and also means there is some risk around related restructure costs should the funding cease. This would not be a risk in 2021/22 and all efforts would be made to limit the impact of any such costs through redeployment as appropriate.
- 6.2 One of the aims of the funding is to reduce the overall costs to the public sector of rough sleeping; this will include the impact on spending budgets over and above those on Local Government. There is no directly related savings target or proposal arising from the use of this funding for LBC as the aims and outcomes are agreed with MHCLG. Additionally, the budgets within Croydon that should see reduced spend as a result of this funding, such as Homelessness and Social Care budgets, are demand led and the main impact would be a slowing in the rate of demand growth to be factored into demand projections informing the base budget requirements.

6.3 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

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accommodation and move on for rough sleepers accommodated as a result of the pandemic.

Tranche 2 was confirmed in May 2021; the funding cycle was delayed by delivery of the response to the pandemic. This funding will be paid in autumn 2021, on receipt of a projection of spend for the remainder of the year and confirmation from the Council's s151 officer that funding has been spent as set out in the award letter. Underspend of £152,619 will be deducted from this tranche, leaving a balance of £1,551,114 to be paid.

Any interventions funded will be contained within the funding envelope, there will be a nil financial impact on the Council on in-year spending. Successful outcomes will reduce future costs arising from repeat homelessness, and associated costs to the public purse from rough sleeping.

| | Current year | Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--|------------------|------------------|
| | 2021/22 £'000 | 2022/23 £'000 | 2023/24 £'000 | 2024/25 £'000 |
| Revenue Budget available | | | | |
| Expenditure | 1,704 | | | |
| Income | 1,704 | | | |
| Effect of decision from report | | | | |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Income | | | | |
| Remaining budget | 0 | | | |
| Capital Budget available | | | | |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Effect of decision from report | | | | |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Remaining budget | | | | |

6.4 The effect of the decision

In the [2015 Hard Edges report](#), the costs of rough sleeping to the public purse were calculated to be between £14,300 and £21,200 per person per year. The higher cost being incurred if rough sleeping occurred alongside substance misuse and offending. This is 3 to 4 times the average cost to public services of an average adult (approximately £4,600).

6.5 Risks

Financial risk within the financial year is low, however there are risks relation to

deliverability:

- 6.5.1 Rough sleeping grant funding has brought increased funding to the Council and enhanced our ability to respond to rough sleeping, however the short term nature of funding, and the inclusion of further funding streams in-year (five in 2020-21) creates challenges in terms of deliverability, and effective planning strategically. MHCLG have excluded core services from their grant funding, therefore in-house resources to commission, mobilise, contract manage and administer interventions are very lean, and officers are balancing this against operational delivery and the need to plan for future funding rounds. There is an ongoing risk of slippage in delivery of the programme as a result.
- 6.5.2 An outcome of the short term nature of funding cycles is that services delivered are primarily short term, and strategic gaps that would require longer term contracts to ensure delivery cannot be supported. Externally commissioned services, and the Council are limited to recruiting staff on fixed term contracts, which has negative impacts on deliverability with high turnover and staffing gaps towards the end of the funding period.
- 6.5.3 Clear strategic direction in terms of the Council's priorities regarding homelessness and rough sleeping, and clarity as to the Council's minimum offer is also required in order to respond to such a fluid programme.

6.6 Options

"Do nothing". Should the Council fail to implement the grant, MHCLG would claw back any unspent grant. This would result in a loss of services for rough sleepers. Services to tackle rough sleeping would be lost and it would be necessary to decommission services.

6.7 Future savings/efficiencies

- 6.7.1 Internal recruitment will be made available to re-deployees, reducing potential redundancy costs.
- 6.7.2 Successful avoidance or relief of rough sleeping does create savings to the public purse, as set out in the Hard Edges report. The expectation from MHCLG is that RSI funding is designed to build upon existing local rough sleeping services and should not be used to substitute existing support offers

Approved by: Sarah Attwood, Finance Manager

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Head of Litigation and Corporate Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that whilst the recommendations within this report have no direct legal implications as they are for information, Local authorities' duties towards homeless people are contained in Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). Local authorities have a duty to secure permanent accommodation for unintentionally homeless people in priority need. Changes introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 placed additional duties on local authorities

which apply to all eligible applicants irrespective of whether they fall into a priority need category. Local authorities have, as a result, a duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness; and a duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants. Housing authorities have a duty to provide or secure the provision of advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness, free of charge. This advice and assistance must be made available to any person in the district “including people who are not eligible for further homelessness services as a result of their immigration status.”

Approved by: Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 8.1 The grant funding supports eight internal staffing posts, three of which will extend existing fixed term contracts and five of which will require recruitment. Posts will be made available to eligible re-deployees.

Approved by: Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 An equality analysis has been drafted and has found that implementation of grant funding will have no negative impact on protected groups. It did identify a lack of evidence concerning two protected groups: religion or belief and sexual orientation. An action to mitigate this will be to consult with community groups through the recently established Homelessness Forum established by CVA.

The analysis also found the implementation of the grant funding will have a positive impact on groups that share protected characteristics as outlined below:

- ensure that as few people as possible return to streets from emergency accommodation put in place during COVID-19. As COVID-19 remains a health risk, it is also essential that people, particularly those who are at increased risk of severe illness, are kept safe;
- continue to ensure a response to those who remain or arrive on the streets who are at risk of Covid-19;
- ensure longer-term accommodation and support solutions for those already in a rough sleeping pathway – enabling them to move on to independent living; and
- free up spaces in hostels so that supported accommodation is available for those that need it.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 10.1 Environmental impact will be minimised. Internal staff will be required to follow Providers are required to evidence how they will reduce the environmental impact of their service in any procurement exercise. For example, the Housing First service uses pool cars rather than paying mileage allowance.

11. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 11.1 The Rough Sleeping Coordinator post works closely with the Anti-Social-Behaviour Team, and Violence Reduction Network to identify strategies to resolve any street based activity such as begging or street drinking. Increasing the Council's capacity to resolve rough sleeping reduces the number of rough sleepers, and the length of time they spend on the streets, both of which have a positive impact on crime and disorder where these individuals are also displaying anti-social behaviour.
- 11.2 It is important to note that rough sleeping and crime and disorder are not synonymous.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 12.1 n/a

13. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 13.1 n/a – for information only.

14. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 **WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?**

NO

- 14.2 **HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?**

NO

The subject of this report does not lead directly to processing of personal data. Where required, DPIAs will be completed during mobilisation of specific projects.

Approved by: Julia Pitt, the Director of Gateway Services

CONTACT OFFICER:

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07776991162

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-initiative-2021-to-2022-funding-allocations>