

Health and Wellbeing Board	
15th July 2021	
Title	Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment of Rough Sleepers in Barnet
Report of	Public Health
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix 1 – Health & Wellbeing Needs Assessment of Rough Sleepers in Barnet – Full Report
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Summary	
In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government announced that all homeless people in the UK should be supported into accommodation. These arrangements ended in Barnet on 10th August 2020. At this time, London Borough of Barnet (LBB) continued to provide accommodation for those who had been placed in accommodation during the pandemic and also continued to offer accommodation to verified rough sleepers who were assessed as being vulnerable.	
To appropriately address the needs of homeless people in Barnet through the pandemic, a multi-agency partnership task and finish group was established. This group developed this needs assessment to understand the support needs and complexities of this group. Whilst this needs assessment is a broad health needs assessment, COVID brings additional complexities that are to be considered. The partnership included representatives from:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barnet Homes Housing Options Service• Homeless Action in Barnet• LB Barnet Public Health• LB Barnet Community Engagement & Participation• LB Barnet Adults & North Central (NCL) CCG Joint Commissioning Team• North Central London (NCL) CCG	

There are many different definitions of homelessness, but where the term ‘homeless’ is used in the need’s assessment, it is intended to capture current rough sleepers and people with a history of rough sleeping who are now in temporary or communal accommodation.

Through the pandemic, Barnet accommodated almost 200 single people who were currently or at imminent risk of rough sleeping. Homeless Action in Barnet were at the time supporting 113 rough sleepers. This indicates that the actual number of rough sleepers in Barnet in the spring of 2020 was at least 113 people but could as many as 200. Many of those individuals remain in temporary accommodation whilst their support needs are assessed, and longer-term housing options are explored. However, some have returned to the street and although slow, there remains a continued new flow of people rough sleeping. It is estimated that in the spring of 2021, between 15-30 people were actively rough sleeping in Barnet.

The full Needs Assessment, including an Executive Summary, is provided as an Appendix to this report. The Needs Assessment provides information on the policy context, local specialist services, impact of the wider determinants of health on this group of residents, health and homelessness, health-related behaviours in homeless, mental health & suicidal ideation, substance misuse and multiple exclusion homelessness. Recommendations based on the findings of the report cover governance for the work arising out this needs assessment, furthering prevention opportunities, further insight and intelligence work, addressing barriers to suitable healthcare, housing and support pathways, addressing substance misuse and migrant health. Some work is already underway addressing these issues including a specialist project addressing substance misuse and homelessness.

Recommendations

1. That the Board note the finding and recommendations of the needs assessment
2. The members of the Board commit to joint working to addressing the needs identified through the needs assessment of this underserved population
3. That the Board agree to receive future reports on action plans and progress on implementation of the recommendations of the needs assessment.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government announced that all homeless people in the UK should be supported into accommodation. This meant that for the first time, Barnet accommodated all rough sleepers, regardless of whether they met eligibility criteria. This included people with no recourse to public funds who the council do not normally have a duty to accommodate.

In order to provide support to these residents, both in the short term during the pandemic, and on a more long-term basis, a partnership working group was established who led in the development of a health needs assessment.

This report summarises the findings and recommendations of the needs assessment, and what is required from the Health and Wellbeing Board to support successful delivery of the recommendations.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The proposed recommendations are based on policy, evidence, best practice examples and experiences of local service providers.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not applicable

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The recommendations of this report will be delivered via the delivery mechanisms (Homeless Forum and strategic board) detailed in the report.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Addressing homelessness and the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 is a key priority of the Barnet Corporate Plan 2021-25 within the “healthy” priority. The recommendations in this report directly support partners to achieve this priority.
- 5.1.2 Addressing the needs of rough sleepers in Barnet aligns with the priority to deliver integrated health services in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25. Developing a health-focussed action plan to improve outcomes for homeless people and reduce avoidable secondary care presentations is specified within the strategy.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 There are no immediate financial implications for this report. The action plan arising out of the recommendations in the needs assessment will be delivered within existing staffing and financial resources in Public Health and Partner agencies such as NHS, Voluntary and Community sector organisations who are funded from diverse sources and for a wide range of purposes.

- 5.2.2 Grant funding has been obtained to date from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Public Health England (PHE) to deliver specific programmes relating to homelessness. £286,598 has been received for delivery from March 2021 – April 2022. Confirmation of extension for a further 12 months is expected.

- 5.2.3 Evidence has indicated that addressing the health needs of homeless people at an early stage results in improved outcomes for the person and cost-savings across health and social care services.

5.3 Social Value

N/A

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The relevant legislation has been referred to in part 4 of the report.

5.4.2 Barnet Council Constitution, Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, Health and Wellbeing Board responsibilities:

“(2) To agree a Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS) for Barnet taking into account the findings of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and strategically oversee its implementation to ensure that improved population outcomes are being delivered.”

(3) To work together to ensure the best fit between available resources to meet the health and social care needs of the whole population of Barnet, by both improving services for health and social care and helping people to move as close as possible to a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing”

“(5) Specific responsibilities for overseeing public health and promoting prevention agenda across the partnership”

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 No specific risks associated with this decision.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The proposals in this report do not impact negatively on any protective characteristic group, or any other groups. The report demonstrates how people who are homeless often have worst health and wellbeing than the general population. The recommendations would result in this group having improved access to services and their specific needs met more suitably.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 N/A

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 This report and attached needs assessment have been developed in collaboration with key partners from:

- Barnet Homes Housing Options Service
- Homeless Action in Barnet
- LB Barnet Public Health
- LB Barnet Community Engagement & Participation
- LB Barnet Adults & North Central London CCG Joint Commissioning Team
- North Central London CCG

Consultation with staff working in and service users accessing homelessness services in the borough was also conducted as part of the report.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 The findings in this need's assessment are informed by three main methods:

1. Service user and staff feedback and experience:

Service user feedback and the experiences of staff were collated by Homeless Action Barnet both for the purpose of this needs assessment and to inform continued service improvement.

2. Analysis of local and national data

An information sharing agreement was signed by local partners which allowed the partnership data to be analysed by the Public Health team. National data was utilised from a range of sources referenced in the report.

3. Applying principles from national evidence

Rapid literature review was undertaken exploring the impact of homelessness on health. National evidence is applied to help interpret local data and draw conclusions where data is incomplete.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 Full references for papers cited in the needs assessment are provided in the reference section of the needs assessment.