**1920-0232 North London Winter Weather Shelter: Service Specification**

**October 2019**

**Overview:**

In response to the rising numbers of European Economic Area (EEA) nationals sleeping rough, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have launched a new £10 million fund which is being made available to local authorities in England from September until March 2020. As part of this, the government has extended the powers to support certain EEA nationals who are not eligible for other types of support. The funding is intended to enable local authorities to provide swift, bespoke interventions to rough sleepers in their area, as well as enhance existing services during the coldest months of the winter season.

Islington Council - acting as the lead for five of the six North London boroughs (LB Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington) – has submitted a bid to fund a new Winter Weather Shelter. A building has been identified in Chalk Farm, providing a maximum of 25 bed spaces (i.e. 3-5 bed spaces per borough), and it is intended that the service will run from mid-November/start of December until 31 March 2020.

**Key Partners:**

**One Housing Group –** Owners of the building, providing housing management and housekeeping functions.

**Support Provider –** To manage the service, once appointed.

**North London Housing Partnership (NLHP) –** To coordinate the setting up processes and provide an on-going strategic management function.

**Key Stakeholders:**

**Central Eastern European Homelessness Accommodation Scheme (CEEHAS) –** To refer into the shelter, as well as provide additional casework, advice and assistance into accommodation, employment, as well as interpretation and translation resources.

**London Borough of Islington –** As the lead borough for the Service in terms of securing the funding.

**North London Housing Partnership (NLHP) Boroughs’ Commissioned Outreach Teams –** As the key referrers into the accommodation, as well as linking into ongoing casework at the end of the project, and for support from specialist roles as appropriate.

**Routes Homes Service –** To provideliaison, input and knowledge exchange.

**Aims and Objectives of the Shelter:**

The shelter will provide an expert, bespoke casework service designed to rapidly, and sustainably ensure access to employment and accommodation for work-ready, low to medium support EEA Nationals. It will be a cross-borough shelter, taking referrals from five North London boroughs of Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington.

The shelter will provide 24 hour accommodation (although night shelter provision could be considered should remaining funding not stretch to the preferred 24 hour model) and casework for up to 25 EEA nationals, working alongside our currently funded Central Eastern European Homelessness Assistance Scheme (CEEHAS), who currently employ a Romanian and Polish speaking outreach worker to provide advice and assistance into accommodation and employment for this cohort.

The shelter will be operational to cover the coldest winter months - approx. mid November 2019 to the end of March 2020 (pending planning application and procurement processes) - and may in many cases provide a second-stage staging post for onward referrals of appropriate clients from other shelters operational previous to this time, therefore freeing up much required space within shelters more appropriate for higher support need cases.

The shelter would act as an additional, bespoke service over and above additional accommodation being made available for EEA rough sleepers being made within the five North London boroughs, to become the only service specifically for EEA nationals within the sub region.

**Target Client Cohort(s) and Eligibility:**

* EEA National rough sleepers with low to medium support needs
* Aged 18+
* Verified rough sleepers in one of the aforementioned five boroughs and as per criteria for the suspension of derogation for EEA rough sleepers

The intensive case work model will ensure that it provides a sustained route off the streets for this cohort, therefore committing to the ‘in for good’ policy promoted by the GLA.

Service User Referral and Access Arrangements:

* All referrals will be made directly to the winter shelter from the five boroughs’ commissioned outreach services and CEEHAS.
* The service will be flexible in accepting referrals throughout the opening hours seven days per week.
* An initial risk assessment will be completed with each service user at the point of entry into the service

Move on from the Service:

* A move on plan will be agreed with the service user within an agreed number of days of entry into the service. The move on plan should specify clear actions with appropriate timeframes, that have been jointly agreed by both the service user and the support staff.
* Move on options for individuals with recourse to public funds will include:
  + Reconnection to services and housing in their home area (where there is no former connection) utilising family and friends networks as appropriate
  + Night shelters
  + Private-rented sector accommodation with the Rent Deposit Scheme
  + Temporary Accommodation where the service user has been assessed as being eligible, homeless, vulnerable and in priority need, as per Section 189 Housing Act (1996)

**Service Provider Role and Responsibilities:**

**Engagement** – support individuals accessing the service to engage in support, such as the outreach team, CEEHAS team, financial inclusion and immigration advice surgeries when attending the shelter.

**Assessment and onward referrals** - ensuring that all clients are assessed, are allocated a case worker and that action plans are in place which prevent a return to rough sleeping

**EEA Casework**:

* Making enquiries and checking information
* Apply for the EU Settlement scheme
* Application and collation of required ID and National Insurance Number
* Referrals to reconnection resources and assisting reconnections
* Preparing for EU Reconnections

**Assistance into employment services -** above actions assisting individuals to become ‘work ready’

* + Referrals into access to employment resources – CEEHAS, in-borough resources.
  + Signposting to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

**Health and wellbeing**

* + all service users are encouraged to register with a GP and engage with substance misuser services.

**Financial inclusion**

**Move-on** – service users engage with the move on worker and also outreach teams to identify move on options and work together to ensure move on as quickly as possible.

**No recourse to public funds (NRPF)** – service users are referred to the NRPF caseworker (Islington clients) or other services such as Routes Home for support with a reconnection, or for employment support where appropriate.

**Scheme Funding:**

Islington Council – acting as the lead for five of the six North London boroughs – has submitted a bid to MHCLG’s Cold Weather Fund. In terms of delivering the service, £217,220 has been sought. This is intended to cover the support provider’s initial set up and running costs; staffing, including a dedicated PRS move-on post; and a personalisation budget.

**Project Governance:**

The appointed support provider will sit on the North London Winter Shelter Steering Group which will meet once a month, or as required, for the duration of the service, as well as attending the NL Rough Sleeper Leads Group. The steering group will include representatives from all the key partners/stakeholders, and will be chaired by the NLHP.

The support provider will lead on the submission of the weekly rolling log updates which are required by the NLHP, and shared with all steering group members. More detailed monthly reports will be required, and used as the basis for performance monitoring.

**DELIVERY PLAN**

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| **Timeline for delivery** | **Activity** |
| October 2019 | Identification of the Chalk Farm Road property; liaising with building contracts and support services.  Procurement process and planning processes initiated. |
| November 2019 | Conclusion of procurement and planning processes.  Recruitment of support provider staffing.  Partnerships and referral pathways of key stakeholders put into place.  Training and induction of staff. |
| December 2019 | Shelter opens and accepts referrals. |
| January 2020 | Shelter open |
| February 2020 | Shelter open |
| March 2020 | Move on progressed and handover of any remaining casework to borough outreach and specialist roles and schemes. |