

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON MARCH 4, 2019
FROM:	MARTIN HAYWARD CITY MANAGER
SUBJECT:	CORE AREA INFORMED RESPONSE – PILOT UPDATE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the City Manager, the following actions **BE TAKEN** with respect to London’s Core Area Informed Response:

- (a) The report entitled “*London’s Core Area Informed Response - A Report on the First 90 Days*” (dated February 2019) **BE RECEIVED**; and,
- (b) Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to take the actions necessary to implement the Coordinated Informed Response in 2019, and on a go-forward basis, subject to the necessary budget approvals.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- Core Area – Informed Response (SPPC: September 17, 2018)

BACKGROUND

On September 18, 2018 Council resolved that the Core Area Informed Response be received including the proposed approach, process, timelines and key deliverables.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the report entitled *London’s Core Area Informed Response – A Report on the First 90 Days (attached as Appendix A)*, and to provide an update on the plan for the response going forward in 2019.

Like many other communities across Canada, London is experiencing an increase in street-involved activity including unpredictable and disruptive behaviours, vandalism and excessive garbage, disruption to businesses, trespassing and urban camps. These challenges are related, in part, to the increased risks from substance use, mental illness, homelessness, and pressures on the supports, treatment and available housing stock.

The Core Area Informed Response (Response) is a caring and compassionate response that aims to support individuals who are street-involved, sleeping rough and urban camping in finding safe alternative solutions focused on housing. The collaborative Response links to the City of London’s Strategic Plan, the London Plan, the Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan, and the Community Mental Health and Addiction Strategy. Links to community plans and initiatives include the Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy, London for All initiative and other related activities.

The Core Area Informed Response is based on principles that guide the strategies and implementation of actions. The principles include:

- We will work collaboratively across all service areas and with other groups;
- We will learn from other communities and employ focused solutions;
- We will assess the effectiveness of our actions and use the results to make evidence-informed decisions;

- We will embed harm reduction pillars in our work;
- We will be a caring and compassionate community; and,
- We will build on infrastructure and services that currently exist.

Five core strategies and a series of short, medium and long-term actions were identified and approved by Council in September 2018. The strategies include:

- Work collaboratively to solve homelessness through a Housing First approach;
- Maintain the safety and cleanliness of private and public spaces;
- Protect and promote the safety of Londoners;
- Provide a caring and compassionate response and enhance services available; and,
- Invest in collaborative work practices to support the effective implementation of this informed response.

Implementation of Pilot Program

In September 2018, a number of service areas within the City of London and partner organizations launched a 16 week pilot program, known as the Core Area Informed Response. Response partners included London Police Service, London Cares and City Services such as Homeless Prevention, Municipal Bylaw Enforcement, Planning, Parks, Roads and Transportation, Social Services, Corporate Security and Service London. The pilot set out to:

- Implement the short-term actions identified in the Core Area Informed Response Strategy;
- Provide an immediate response to address the issues causing public concern;
- Learn more about what was happening in London to better understand the situation; and,
- Collect data to strengthen the Core Area Informed Response in the future.

The pilot program included an evaluation aimed at learning more about the characteristics and behaviours of street involved individuals including those that are urban camping and sleeping rough, and to strengthen a coordinated response in the future. Findings are considered preliminary and include the following key observations:

- 93 individuals were provided with housing search support
- 94 urban campsites were removed
- 196 instances of sleeping rough were addressed

Preliminary information about individuals urban camping and sleeping rough included:

- Of the 59 individuals who responded: 71% male; 26% female and 3% identified as other gender
- 94% reported living with an addiction
- 17% indicated they had been in London less than 6 months

The pilot program was successful in engaging numerous community partners in the response, engaging with individuals with lived experience and testing various approaches to build on a city-wide collaborative response.

Next Steps

Based on the principles and informed by the evaluation, and on a go-forward basis commencing April 1, 2019, the city-wide Coordinated Informed Response will have in place a coordinated cross-functional team to provide a caring and compassionate response to the unpredictable and disruptive behaviours of individuals that are sleeping rough and urban camping related to substance use and mental illness. The results of the evaluation, and knowledge gained by working in an integrated pilot program will be applied to adapt the strategies and actions to better serve needs in London. Results will continue to be monitored and evaluated.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The cost of the 2019 Coordinated Informed Response activities is estimated to be approximately \$1.25 million for the nine months beginning April 1, 2019. This includes costs related to coordination, outreach, cross-functional response and evaluation. There is currently no approved budget for this work. As a result, Civic Administration intends to fund the 2019 cost of this initiative from the tax supported Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy Reserve on a one-time basis, noting that the projected 2019 ending balance of this reserve is approximately \$12.8 million.

The intended uses of the Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy Reserve are:

- (a) To provide funding for opportunities that create efficiency, effectiveness and economy within the City's tax supported operations; and,
- (b) To provide funding for contingency costs in excess of funds available in the contingency reserve (OBCR).

In general, the Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy Reserve aims to provide funding for opportunities that create a return for the City. Returns can include increased future revenues, decreased future expenditures, increased service levels, improved service quality, etc. Civic Administration believes this is an appropriate source of funding as the Coordinated Informed Response aims to more efficiently and effectively address city-wide issues by adopting a cross-functional, coordinated and targeted approach.

Civic Administration will be bringing forward a business case for consideration as part of the 2020-2023 Multi-Year Budget in order to secure permanent funding for this initiative beyond 2019.

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February
2019

London's Core Area **Informed Response**

A Report on the First 90 Days

London's Response to Street-Involved Activity, Including Unpredictable, Disruptive Behaviours, Urban Camping, and Sleeping Rough.

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What is the Core Area Informed Response?

What is happening in London?

Like many other communities across Canada, London is experiencing an increase in street-involved activity, including unpredictable and disruptive behaviours, vandalism and excessive garbage, disruption to businesses, trespassing, and urban camps.

These challenges are, in part, a result of increased risks from substance use, untreated mental illness, homelessness, and pressures on the supports, treatment, and housing available.

Other communities, such as Windsor, Vancouver, Ottawa, Calgary, Hamilton, Toronto, and many others, are experiencing similar challenges.

How did the City of London respond?

In September 2018, service areas within the City of London and partner organizations launched a pilot program known as the Core Area Informed Response. The Core Area Informed Response is a caring and compassionate response that aims to support individuals who are street involved, sleeping rough, and urban camping in finding safe alternative solutions focused on housing.

City of London service areas, divisions, and partners that were part of the Core Area Informed Response include: City Manager's Office, Communications, Corporate Security and Emergency Management¹, Human Resources, Homeless Prevention, London Cares, London Police Service², Municipal Law Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, Road Maintenance, and Social Services. Additional service areas and partners will continue to be engaged moving forward.

Urban camp definition: Urban camps are makeshift, temporary physical structures set up in an urban environment or park.

Sleeping rough definition: Sleeping rough is when an individual is sleeping in the open without a physical structure, such as a park bench or stairwell.

¹ Corporate Security had dedicated resources for a 60-day period starting September 17, 2019.

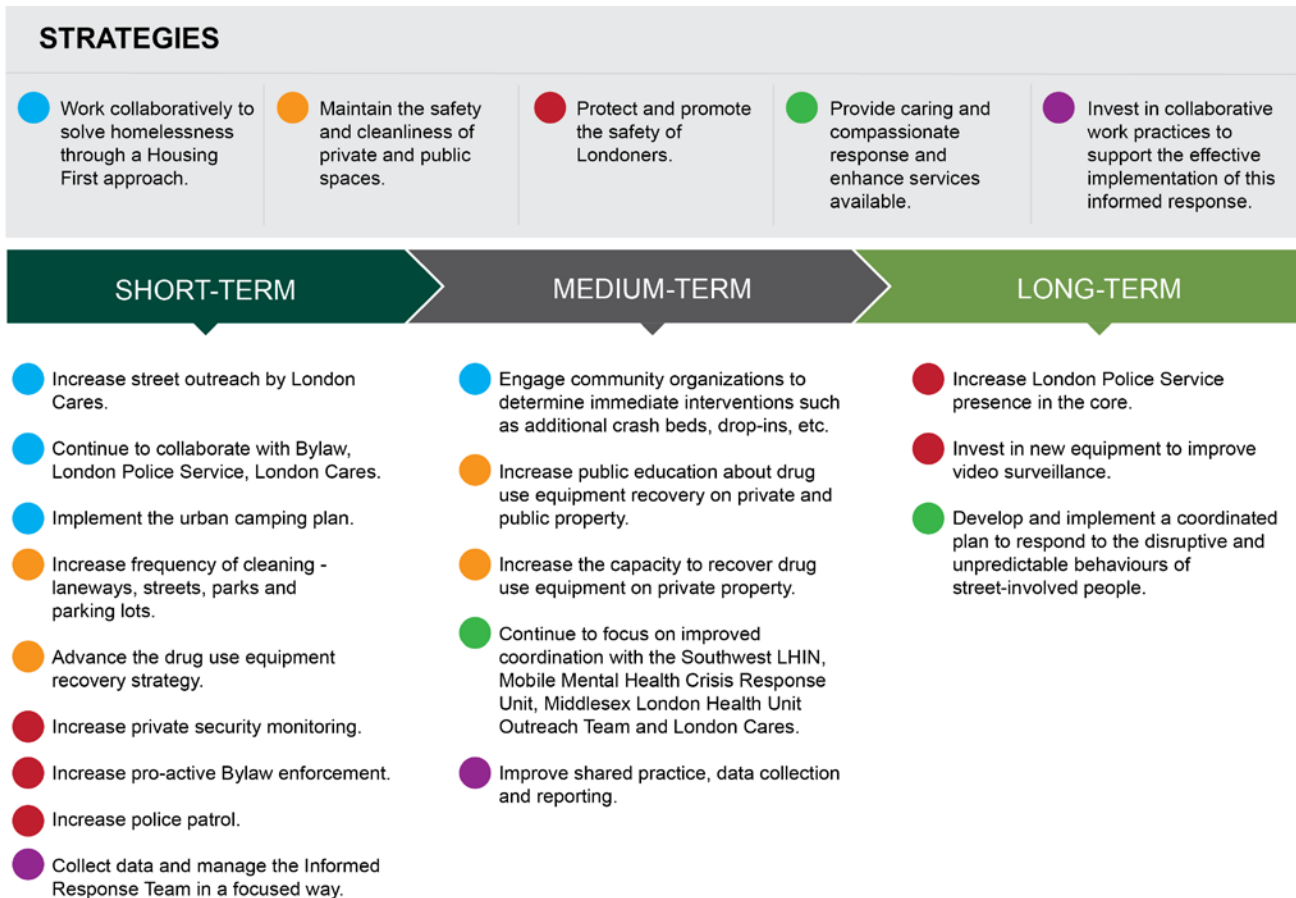
² London Police Service had dedicated Officers for 30-day period starting October 15, 2019.

The principles that guide the Core Area Informed Response include:

1. We will work collaboratively across all service areas and with other groups.
2. We will learn from other communities and employ focused solutions.
3. We will assess the effectiveness of our actions and use the results to make evidence-informed decisions.
4. We will embed harm reduction pillars in our work.
5. We will be a caring and compassionate community.
6. We will build on infrastructure and services that currently exist.

The Core Area Informed Response includes five core strategies and a series of short, medium, and long-term actions. See Fig. 1 below.

Fig. 1



What did we do between September and December 2018?

Between September 17, 2018 and December 16, 2018, the City of London and its partners set out to:

- pilot the short-term actions in the Core Area Informed Response;
- provide an immediate proactive response to address the issues causing public concern;
- learn more about what was happening in London to better understand the situation; and,
- collect data to strengthen the Core Area Informed Response in the future.

The core area was defined by the boundaries on the map on the map below.



What did we do during the Core Area Informed Response pilot?

Data in this report was collected between September 17, 2018 – December 16, 2018. This was a pilot initiative and therefore baseline data was not available for trend analysis purposes. The data collected through the pilot will serve as baseline data for future reports and allow for a trend analysis to be completed.

London Police Service and Corporate Security were the two main contributors to the data related to criminal behaviour, unpredictable behaviour, and destruction and vandalism, and therefore, the corresponding data only relates to the timeframe of their involvement, which was 30 days for London Police Service and 60 days for Corporate Security. Data provided by London Police Service relates only to the involvement of the four London Police Officers involved in the Core Area Informed Response.

The following is an overview of the results from the Core Area Informed Response pilot from all participating services.

Solve Homelessness	
196 instances of sleeping rough were addressed	94 urban camps were removed
85 referrals were made to emergency shelter	93 individuals were provided with housing search support
49 housing viewings were attended with individuals	13 individuals were housed

Protect the Well-Being of Londoners	
509 instances of loitering were addressed	61 instances of unpredictable, disruptive behaviour were addressed
22 instances of criminal behaviour were addressed	6 instances of destruction or vandalism were addressed

Clean Up Public and Private Spaces	
132,945 syringes were recovered from needle bins in the core area ³	1,997 syringes were recovered from urban camps and sleeping rough locations
401 instances of debris in public spaces were cleaned up	84 bins of garbage ⁴ were picked up from urban camps and sleeping rough locations

Provide Caring and Compassionate Services	
32 referrals were made to social services	30 referrals were made to housing services
29 referrals were made to justice services	28 referrals were made to health services
20 referrals were made to food services	

³ 98.5% of syringes collected during the pilot were collected from stationary needle collection bins.

⁴ Items of value were stored and available for retrieval by owners. Very few individuals retrieved these items. Valuables which appeared to be stolen were taken to London Police Service.

What did we learn about urban camps and sleeping rough?

The following is an overview of the results from the Core Area Informed Response pilot related to urban camps and sleeping rough.

Urban Camps and Sleeping Rough Occurrences With Individuals On-Site	
37% of the 94 urban camps had individuals on-site	98% of the 196 sleeping rough occurrences had individuals on-site

Number of Individuals On-Site at Urban Camps and Sleeping Rough Occurrences	
<i>Of the 35 urban camps with individuals on-site:</i>	<i>Of the 192 sleeping rough occurrences with individuals on-site:</i>
51% had 1 individual on-site	48% had 1 individual on-site
34% had 2 individuals on-site	27% had 2 individuals on-site
15% had 3 or more individuals on-site	25% had 3 or more individuals on-site

Visible Substance Use Equipment On-Site	
43% of 68 ⁵ urban camps had substance use equipment on-site	15% of 84 sleeping rough occurrences had substance use equipment on-site

⁵ Data related to visible substance use equipment on-site was only available for 68 of the 94 urban camps and 84 of the 196 sleeping rough occurrences.

What did we learn about individuals sleeping rough or in urban camps?

When London Cares was on-site at an urban camp or sleeping rough occurrence, Outreach Workers gathered information about individuals to aid in providing referrals and support. Providing information was voluntary and therefore the data is not representative of all individuals engaged during the Core Area Informed Response. The response rate to some questions is lower than others. This may be due to the fact that it takes time for individuals to feel comfortable disclosing information that is more personal in nature.

The following is an overview of the results from the Core Area Informed Response pilot related to individuals sleeping rough or in urban camps.

Age Range of Individuals	
<i>48 individuals responded</i>	
2% - 15 – 19 years of age	
23% - 20 – 29 years of age	
36% - 30 – 39 years of age	
10% - 40 – 49 years of age	
21% - 50 – 59 years of age	
8% - 60 years of age or older	

Gender of Individuals		
<i>59 individuals responded</i>		
71% Male	26% Female	3% Other Gender ⁶

⁶ Responses from individuals included transgender and unknown.

Source of Income		
<i>44 individuals responded</i>		
50% Ontario Works	48% Ontario Disability Support Program	2% Employment Insurance

Interest in Assistance Securing Housing
96% of 46 individuals wanted assistance to secure housing

Length of Time in London
<i>18 individuals responded</i>
61% in London all their life
5% in London 2 years or more
17% in London between 6 months and 2 years
17% in London less than 6 months

Health Concerns	
94% of 34 individuals reported living with an addiction	92% of 25 individuals reported living with a mental health issue
88% of 25 individuals reported living with a chronic medical condition	53% of 19 individuals reported living with a physical disability

Factors that Would Help Individuals Find and Keep Housing
<i>41 individuals responded</i>
73% said affordable housing
44% said financial supports
20% said assistance to secure housing

What did we learn from the community?

Community members who live and work in the core area shared their opinions about the Core Area Informed Response through a survey distributed through Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) and community and neighbourhood associations.

27% of the 124 respondents said the core area looked cleaner	19% of the 123 ⁷ respondents said they felt safer in the core area ⁸	16% of the 123 respondents said there were fewer people sleeping outside or in urban camps
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Community members told us that...

They noticed a difference.

“Overall, a huge improvement. Thank you.”

“From our little corner of the world, we have seen much improvement. So little steps...I think there is some progress that is noticeable.”

This is a community issue, not just a City issue.

“Would like to see property owners be held responsible for keeping their frontage in good repair.”

“The difference was noticeable, but not dramatically so. Tough to stay on top of the issue without complete community participation.”

There is still more work to be done.

“It will take time. Keep trying. Good start.”

“I expect that, though efforts may have been mounted, the crises we are seeing are on the rise and we are not keeping up.”

⁷ A total of 124 individuals responded to the survey. However, one individual only responded to one question. Therefore, one question had 124 respondents and the remaining questions had 123 respondents.

⁸ A number of individuals reported they have never felt unsafe and therefore their response indicated no change.

What are the next steps?

1. Use the key learnings and data from the pilot to better understand results and impact and to strengthen the Coordinated Informed Response.
2. Plan for and implement the Coordinated Informed Response actions through consultation and the City's budgeting process.

What can you do?

In some situations, an individual or groups of individuals may demonstrate distressing, disruptive, and/or unpredictable behaviours. Here is what you can do:

If someone is in distress:

- In an emergency situation, if someone is causing harm to themselves, others, or property, call 911.
- If someone appears to be experiencing homelessness, call **London Cares at 519-667-2273 (CARE)**, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you see an urban camp:

- Do not attempt to remove the camp.
- Report the location and details to es@london.ca or call **519-661-4570**.

If you find discarded needles or drug use equipment:

- If you come across needles and other drug use equipment found on City property, call **519-661-CITY (2489) ext. 4965**. This phone line is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For more information on the safe handling and disposal of needles and other drug use equipment, visit london.ca/needles.