Item No: 17

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 25th November 2026**

Glasgow City Integration Joint Board

Report By: **Lynsey Smith, Assistant Chief Officer, Operations and Governance**

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Rough Sleeping Update

Purpose of Report:	This report is being presented following a request at the Glasgow City IJB meeting on 13 May 2026 for an outline of the overall picture of rough sleeping. It is also intended to provide the IJB with an update on rough sleeping in Glasgow, with reference to specific trends.

Background/Engagement:	At the IJB on 13 May 2026, Members noted that while rough sleeping numbers are relatively small, further detail was sought on the process used to identify and engage with individuals. Officers advised that rough sleepers are monitored on a weekly basis, with daily reviews where required and agreed to provide a report to a future meeting outlining the overall picture of rough sleeping. The report draws together information about the identification of rough sleepers, the reduction of rough sleeping, and the mitigation of the challenges of rough sleeping so that these may be better understood by the members of the IJB.

Governance Route:	The matters contained within this paper have been previously considered by the following group(s) as part of its development. HSCP Senior Management Team ☐ Council Corporate Management Team ☐ Health Board Corporate Management Team ☐

	Council Committee ☐ Update requested by IJB ☒ Other ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Recommendations:	The Integration Joint Board is asked to: a) Note the contents of this report; b) Acknowledge that rough sleeping, while presenting serious challenges to those impacted by it, has not increased significantly in recent years; c) Note the reasons for the differences between nationally reported statistics and information received from Simon Community Scotland; and d) Note that Homelessness Services works with a range of partners to support rough sleepers in the city into settled and sustainable housing outcomes.

Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:

Efforts to identify rough sleepers, reduce the numbers of rough sleepers in the city, and to mitigate the challenges of rough sleeping support the following Partnership Priorities identified in the Strategic Plan for Health and Social Care 2023-2028:

- Prevention, early intervention and well-being
- Supporting greater self-determination and informed choice
- Supporting people in their communities
- Strengthening communities to reduce harm

Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:

Reference to National Health & Wellbeing Outcome(s):	Work conducted by Partnership staff in relation to rough sleeping is focused on the following National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes: • 3 - People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected. • 4 - Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services. • 5 - Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities. • 7 - People who use health and social care services are safe from harm.

Personnel:	There are no direct personnel implications.

Carers:	There are no direct implications for Carers.

Provider Organisations:	Although Partnership staff work with Provider Organisations in their work with rough sleepers, there are no direct implications for these organisations in the content of the paper.

Equalities:	N/A - the IJB is not being asked to consider a proposal to change or introduce a new policy, service, strategy or plan.

Fairer Scotland Compliance:	N/A

Financial:	N/A

Legal:	N/A

Economic Impact:	N/A

Sustainability:	N/A

Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:	N/A

Risk Implications:	N/A – the recommended course only asks the IJB to recognise and note the previously requested information provided in this report.

Implications for Glasgow City Council:	This report does not present any specific, new, implications for Glasgow City Council. As stated in section 2.5 of this report, there is not a static cohort of rough sleepers in the city, although we recognise the vulnerability of anyone who must sleep rough. Rough sleeping can be highly visible, and there is legitimate public concern about the wellbeing of rough sleepers.

Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde:	While this report does not, of itself, present implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, it should be noted that rough sleepers face significant health inequalities and as such, continued efforts to encourage rough sleepers to engage with healthcare provision remain both challenging and vital.

Direction Required to Council, Health Board or Both	
Direction to:	
1. No Direction Required	☒
2. Glasgow City Council	☐
3. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐
4. Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐

1. Purpose

1.1. This report is being presented following a request at the Glasgow City IJB meeting on 13 May 2026 for an outline of the overall picture of rough sleeping. It is also intended to provide the IJB with an update on rough sleeping in Glasgow, with reference to specific trends.

2. Background

2.1. At the IJB on 13 May 2026, members noted that while rough sleeping numbers are relatively small, further detail was sought on the process used to identify and engage with individuals. Officers advised that rough sleepers are monitored on a weekly basis, with daily reviews where required and agreed to provide a report to a future meeting outlining the overall picture of rough sleeping.

2.2. It remains accurate to state that the available data collated by our partners in Simon Community Scotland shows that the number of rough sleeper numbers in the city remains low and stable. For the period 3 August 2026 – 5 October 2026, 20-29 people were identified as rough sleepers, with an average of approximately 24 people known to be sleeping rough at any one time in the city (based on weekly counts).

2.3. The approach to the rough sleeping count used in Glasgow is considered to be international best practice, with other countries using the same methodology.

2.4. Simon Community Scotland routinely engage with partner organisations including Police Scotland, Partnership staff, and registered social landlords to share intelligence about rough sleeping before conducting these counts. They are careful to highlight the fact that rough sleepers can go to great lengths to remain undetected. They also receive reports about and investigate rough sleeping in more remote locations such as parks, golf courses and cemeteries. As such, there is likely to be a proportion of the rough sleeping population who actively avoid discovery because of safety concerns and who do not present as homeless.

2.5. The Scottish Government's "Homelessness in Scotland: 2025-26" statistics bulletin presents a rough sleeping figure that seems higher on initial inspection, i.e. 1,260 applications where at least one member of the household experienced rough sleeping the night before their application (self-reported figures). Although a simple division of this annual number by 52 would suggest that the Simon Community Scotland and self-reported figures are consistent, Homelessness Services staff have long held concerns about the accuracy of the latter figure because of a belief that self-reported rough sleeping may be overstated by individuals who believe that it will improve their prospects of being housed quickly. As such, the Simon Community Scotland figures are our primary operational measure.

2.6. While any level of rough sleeping is concerning, it is positive that Glasgow has not experienced the significant increases seen in some other local authority areas despite the ongoing housing emergency and sustained pressures across homelessness services. That said, the most recent Scottish Government figures referenced at paragraph 2.4 stated that there was a 20% rise in rough sleeping in the city over the last year. This, however, has not been corroborated by the Simon Community Scotland counts referred to at paragraph 2.2.

2.7. Although rough sleeping numbers in Glasgow vary depending on the source consulted, addressing rough sleeping remains a key priority for Homelessness Services. Temporary accommodation was offered to 6,925 unique households during 2025/26 so that they could avoid the crisis of homelessness.

2.8. The available evidence on rough sleeping in the city indicates that it is typically short-term and intermittent rather than sustained, with individuals moving between different forms of accommodation, staying temporarily with friends or family, or re-engaging with homelessness services after periods of where they have broken off contact. There will be, however, a small number of people who continuously sleep rough due to their complex circumstances and reluctance to engage with support services, as would be the case in any major city. However, street services are in routine contact with this group, and accommodation and support are on offer at any time.

2.9. Homelessness Services engagement with the Simon Community Scotland is designed to identify people sleeping rough quickly and connect them to accommodation and support, helping to reduce the likelihood of long-term street homelessness. While any instance of rough sleeping is a cause for concern, the profile of rough sleeping in Glasgow is generally characterised by people experiencing periods of instability rather than large numbers of individuals sleeping on the streets for extended periods. This figure remains consistently low.

2.10. This approach is supported by close operational working between Homelessness Services and Simon Community Scotland. The Street Team shares intelligence gathered through seven-day outreach and daily reviews, enabling Homelessness Services staff to respond quickly where accommodation or wider support is required. Weekly interface meetings bring staff from both organisations together with relevant partner services to review individuals' circumstances, coordinate support plans and consider accommodation options. This connection is further strengthened by the co-location of the Intensive Outreach Social Care Workers within the Simon Community Hub, providing a direct link between street outreach and statutory health and social care services for people with particularly complex needs.

2.11. The introduction of the WAYfinder service on 7 August 2025 further strengthened the city's approach to rough sleeping by providing a single, integrated outreach model operating on a trauma-informed and person-centred basis.

WAYfinder: A new direction in ethical commissioning for Homelessness Services | Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership

2.12. The service supports individuals who are sleeping rough, at risk of homelessness, residing in temporary accommodation, or moving into settled housing. By bringing together a range of outreach and support functions under one framework, WAYfinder aims to reduce fragmentation within the system and ensure that individuals receive coordinated support tailored to their specific circumstances.

2.13. WAYfinder providers include the Salvation Army, Simon Community Scotland, Turning Point Scotland and Wheatley Care.

2.14. Continued collaboration between the Partnership, WAYfinder partners and other third-sector organisations remain critical to ensuring that individuals experiencing rough sleeping can access accommodation, healthcare, welfare support and other services as quickly as possible. The focus remains on preventing rough sleeping wherever possible, reducing the duration of rough sleeping when it occurs, and supporting people into settled and sustainable housing outcomes.

3. Recommendations

3.1. The Integration Joint Board is asked to:

a) Note the contents of this report;
b) Acknowledge that rough sleeping, while presenting serious challenges to those impacted by it, has not increased significantly in recent years;
c) Note the reasons for the differences between nationally reported statistics and information received from Simon Community Scotland; and
d) Note that Homelessness Services works with a range of partners to support rough sleepers in the city into settled and sustainable housing outcomes.