

Date:	6 March 2022
Portfolio:	Communities and Public Protection
The Report of:	Councillor Aicha Less, Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Protection
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1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 12 December 2022:

- No decisions have been made during this period.

2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date:

2.1 Public Protection

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The final draft of the ASB strategy has been completed, incorporating feedback from the formal consultation. Presentation to informal and formal cabinet is occurring over the next few weeks for sign off. The consultation feedback will be published within the consultation webpages for community awareness.

The strategy consultation methodology was presented to the Consultation Quality Improvement board in January as an example of best practice in the depth and spread of consultation taking place.

The multi-agency Strategic Working Group will be formed following publication of the strategy in February to drive forward delivery of the strategic action plan. A Strategic Registered Social Landlord working group will also be formed to run in parallel, establishing best practice in victim care and ASB resolution within the borough.

Basic Command Unit (BCU) / Policing update

Since the introduction of the BCU model for local policing, Westminster has only had one Superintendent covering the Borough as part of the Commissioner's approach to Neighbourhood Policing. As of February 2023, each Borough will have their own Neighbourhood Policing Superintendent. We are pleased to welcome Superintendent Beth Pirie to Westminster in February to lead on Neighbourhood Policing and Strategic Partnerships.

Chief Superintendent Louise Puddefoot, will also start on 20 February, taking over the BCU Commander role from Chief Superintendent Owain Richards.

A list of policing resources attached to each ward can be found in the appendix.

City Inspectors

City Inspectors continue to support the 'Waste Matters' project, focused at educating and improving compliance with collection times, in conjunction with our waste contractor. Officers have issued both residential and commercial warnings and fines where appropriate with prosecution, a later option for continued offenders.

The Waste Action Squad have delivered eight weeks of action since the programme began on 10 October 2022. The team have spoken to over 1000 people about waste and street cleanliness and deep cleaned 80 dumping hotspots. Following a review of the intelligence we have received from on-street engagement, local action plans have been created in each area. We have undertaken 1861 enforcement actions against residential waste so far for this financial year, with an expected total of around 3200 enforcement actions for the full financial year. This data includes fixed penalty notices (FPNs) and warnings. This will equate to an increase of approximately 40% when compared with last year and 67% when compared with 2018/19.

Officers continued to work over the festive period, including Christmas Day, responding to a range of service complaints such as noise, waste and most recently, work to deal with dangerously parked e-scooters and bikes. Officers continue to meet regularly with our communities, BIDs and other stakeholders to address rising issues working in partnership with the Police. Officers have had recent successes in tackling illegal fly posting in Soho, which featured in our monthly members update. We have also delivered the new 'Don't Pee Off Soho' campaign, to reduce street urination. There are now three locations with CCTV cameras focused on waste hot spots, a new initiative to capture fly tipping evidence.

Pedicabs

Westminster City Council has secured prosecutions against 68 pedicab operators for antisocial behaviour in 2022. In partnership with the police, the Council have carried out regular pedicab operations from November 2021 to December 2022 focusing on noise issues caused by pedicabs in and around the West End. Further operations are being planned. In total, 68 drivers have had their details taken so they can be prosecuted for playing loud music after 9pm. Additionally, 27 drivers have been served with written warnings for their behaviour. 25 pedicab cases have already been heard in court, which have resulted in a total of £21,299 fines being issued. A further 4 cases have been settled out of court. Meetings with the Council, Department for Transport, Transport for London, and the industry are being held to discuss how pedicab regulations should look, and ensure powers are available to officers to focus on other issues in addition to noise.

The prosecutions follow the Council's campaign warning visitors to 'be careful what you get into' - highlighting the dangers of unsafe pedicabs and encouraging people to take alternative and licensed modes of transport such as buses, London Underground and black cabs. Posters have been circulated to over 300 businesses and taxi drivers, as well as several thousand flyers being handed out by Metropolitan Police officers in hotspot areas to curb pedicab operators.

The Council hopes the consistently high fines will deter nuisance pedicabs from ripping off unsuspecting tourists and disturbing residents.

The Neighbourhood Coordinator Senior Practitioner is now working with our Communications team to produce a flyer aimed at the riders themselves letting them know of the prosecution results with the hope of deterring them from operating loud and noisy pedicabs in Westminster.

Lastly, we worked with Global and The Hippodrome to get our campaign on the big screen in Leicester Square and are delighted to share that these have been displayed.

We currently do not have any legislative framework to license and regulate pedicabs. We have very limited powers to tackle behaviour from pedicabs, with noise and anti-social behaviour legislation. The council has been calling for additional regulation for this activity for some time. The proposed Transport Bill included a section to enable the licensing of London pedicabs. However, the Transport Secretary confirmed before Christmas, that the legislation was not going to be brought forward in this parliamentary term. Cllr Hug Leader of Westminster City Council continues to lobby government to regulate pedicab activity.

Busking and Street Entertainment

We are in the process of the review of the Street Entertainment Policy. We have met with the Hippodrome to discuss their views and issues with the current scheme. We have just finished our targeted engagement exercise and will be reviewing the results (157 responses). Once Cllr Less has agreed an approach, we will publish the review findings along with the Council's decision on the next steps associated with the Street Entertainment Policy.

If the Policy is to be amended, then a formal period of statutory consultation will take place in the Spring. Following that consultation there will be a need to have the amended policy formally adopted which can take several months.

Safe Havens Scheme

The Safe Havens scheme in Westminster is still under development and is due to deliver the first open spaces in the next quarter. Communications will be going out to business and landowners encouraging businesses to apply for Safe Haven status. Applications will be assessed against a set of agreed criteria; all designed to support vulnerable people and ensure their safety. Westminster is in discussion with Southwark and Lambeth boroughs, ensuring this activity is integrated and consistent, developing a Safe Haven Network, all using one public facing app.

Short Term Lets

Officers are looking at several properties being short term let, in breach of existing legislation. The Government are in consultation on the effect of short-term holiday lets. It will seek to improve the holiday letting market for those living in popular tourist destinations. The scheme, proposed in a new government review, looks at the impact of increases in short-term and holiday lets in England. It could involve physical checks of premises to ensure regulations in areas including health and safety, noise and anti-social behaviour are observed.

Further measures the Government is considering include a registration 'kitemark' scheme with spot checks for compliance with rules on issues such as gas safety, a self-certification scheme for hosts to register with before they can operate, and better information or a single source of guidance setting out the legal requirements for providers.

Pavement Licences

There are just over 500 Pavement Licences across the city. Most have an expiry date of 31 March 2023. The Licensing Service has obtained Cabinet Member approval to issue new and renewal applications for Pavement Licences until the end of the temporary legislation in September 2023. The temporary legislation is likely to become permanent later this year when the Levelling Up Bill receives Royal Assent.

Public Protection activity over Christmas and new year

City Inspectors and Managers provided 24/7 cover across the Christmas and New Year holidays. On New Year's Eve, they worked with partners such as the Police and London Fire Brigade across the West End. The teams dealt with a range of issues such as licensing concerns, illegal street trading and supporting thousands of visitors get around on the night. Officers also supported colleagues in the events team by working in the main control room for the fireworks. Business continued as usual in terms of waste, noise, and inspections, reassuring the community that the Council are out and about whenever the City is operating.

2.2 Communities

Community Investment Strategy

Engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and Council officers revealed the need for a centralised approach around defining needs, identifying outcomes, streamlining grant processes, and measuring the impact of the grants.

The strategy is under development to inform investment in capacity building, partnerships, impact measurement processes and systems and space to create a thriving Voluntary and Community sector. It will help to protect the entry points to the sector, sustain community organisations and grow the sector to thrive and respond to community needs. There is a new landing page on the website where all the community grants the council awards are presented for easy access. Work is underway on council wide guidelines for contracts and grants, compliance processes, application forms and processes to develop a consistent approach. We are collecting data from across the council for the second year on how much we invest in the sector, both in contracts and grants, so that we can develop a more strategic approach.

Westminster Connects

Westminster Connects was initially set up as an emergency response programme at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 to co-ordinate volunteers to support vulnerable residents in the community with vaccine support and food and wellbeing needs.

Connects has focused on developing more volunteering opportunities across the voluntary sector and within the council. Staff volunteering has increased in the council through promoting key 'Give 16' opportunities each month. Connects is working with several council departments to support the development of volunteer roles where appropriate. 8 large scale events have been supported with volunteers, including New Year's Day Parade and Chinese New Year.

VCS contracts

There is an ongoing service review which has informed the development of additional advice services under Cost-of-Living funding, including advice services to support volunteers, apprentices, and trainees, creating employment for residents, and increasing the multi-lingual capacity of advice services.

30 community organisations have been supported to deliver weekly activities, health promotion and hot meals through the Healthy Winter Grants. In December, over 1200 meals were provided this way.

VCS networks

The Food Network was set up at start of the pandemic in April 2020 to convene a network of food banks, community food projects, The Felix Project (Food supplier, part of the London Food Alliance) and council officers in Public Health, Housing, Children's services, Adult Social Care and Economy to help co-ordinate and manage work across Westminster to ensure people in need had access to food. The network is well attended by 15 community organisations working in advice, food, and fuel poverty

services. The network has helped shape the Cost-of-Living Strategy and highlight priorities for those most in need.

The Food and Energy Network meets monthly to collect insight and data and share council approaches around Cost of Living. It is attended by foodbanks, community pantries, advice services and the Felix Project and City Harvest, as well Green Doctors and National Energy Action and council officers from several departments.

The Community Alliance has started, chaired by Cllr Nafsika Butler-Thalassis and Jackie Rosenberg, the Chief Executive of One Westminster. This is a monthly online forum to bring together all organisations working to support people through the winter with warm spaces and activities. The council will present what it is doing, what support the government is providing, and what our analysis tells us about those most affected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis. Community organisations will feed in what they are doing, and what insight they are gathering from the participants in their services.

Engagement and Consultation

To improve the quality of engagement and consultation, we have established a Quality Improvement Board to provide feedback on major consultations taking place. We have also developed a Consultation Forward plan, so upcoming activities are visible for review internally. Improvements have been made to the website so that people can search for consultations, and work is underway to link all consultations onto that site so that the public can search for and respond to consultations. Further support is in development, including a toolkit for engagement and guidance around plain English which should be ready in March 2023. The team have also rolled out the Voice Engagement software, masterclasses around best practice, and we are developing a community of practice to share learning and join up engagement events. A consultation around a 'Charter for Community Participation' is underway and has been extended to increase the reach to different communities.

External approach to equalities

The team published the refreshed objectives in August 2022 and thereafter will start to scope the remit of a wider external equalities plan. The objectives are:

- Staff will represent the demographic of our communities at all levels of the organisation.
- Understand our diverse communities and embed that understanding in how we shape all that we do across the Council.
- Support Westminster's communities to be sustainable, socially inclusive and empowered to act, when they are best placed to do so.
- Demonstrate inclusive leadership, strategic partnership and a clear organisational commitment to be a leader in equality, diversity and inclusion in the city.

We are seeking to invest in our communities, which will be aided by the Community Investment Strategy. We also want to understand how our data can improve how we work with communities to inform an external equality strategy. We are working to understand what levels of data are held by services, reviewing new census data sets available on who our communities are to scope what will be included in this strategy.

#2035

This programme is in collaboration with partners in Westminster to reduce the life expectancy gap and improve the health, wealth, and well-being of local communities through a cross-sector place-based strategy and looking at the wider determinants of health (housing, crime, employment, access to health services, neighbourhood, and community connection). The partnership includes the Police, Department

for Work and Pensions, Imperial College Healthcare, GP Commissioning, Public Health, and Communities. We are developing the relationships between the external partners on the steering group.

Work is underway to build the programme and training resources to support teams across the Council to co-ordinate and lead complex issues involving the community.

Changing Futures

Changing Futures has successfully established several new frontline pilots which involve joining up services around the lived experiences of people who face multiple disadvantages. This includes areas such as change resistant drinkers, victims of violence and homelessness. The focus of the programme is on evaluating learnings from these pilots and making recommendations to the organisation. One of these recommendations is to ensure all services are 'trauma informed' so that staff across the organisation work in more compassionate ways with residents. Training will be delivered through the Centre for Excellence Masterclasses. Additional new workstreams are underway looking at prison leavers and how to join up services to make it easier to get help on release and avoid reoffending.

Community development

This is a capacity building programme for communities involving a programme of leadership and training opportunities for residents and other community groups who would like to be more involved in the council decision making processes. It will also target those who want to affect social action in their areas, deliver events and activities, or would like a better understanding of how the Council works. We will be approaching One Westminster who have a contract with the council to deliver support to our voluntary sector organisations based in Westminster.

The community grants team is delivering engagement activities in the south of the borough including in St James, Pimlico South and Vincent Square, to promote Round 2 of the newly expanded Community Priorities Programme. This will include carrying out surveys to find out what the priorities should be for the fund and reviewing the criteria from the previous round. Other activities will be outreach to schools, libraries, nurseries/pre-schools, community organisations, youth clubs, as well as street canvassing and promotion to internal colleagues.

As part of our Inspiring Communities programme, we will be working in partnership with Everyone Active to support a women-only day at Little Venice Sports Centre as part of International Women's Day on 8 March. The day will include a specially designed programme for women, who will have exclusive use of the centre on the day.

Maida Hill Market: strategic leadership support

The Council recognises its need to actively engage the Harrow Road community and specifically, to repair its relationship with the many communities living around and using the Maida Hill Square. The Council is committed to understanding how to better serve its constituents in the area.

To accomplish this, the Communities Department proposes the assembly of a strategic leadership group around the Square to co-design engagement of communities in and around Maida Hill Square as well as the wider Harrow Road community.

Bloomberg Associates are supporting the community engagement initiative in Maida Hill Square. Ward councillors are being consulted and have provided feedback and recommendations on the membership of the group. Invitation letters and contact will commence with those on the list commencing from 23 January.

APPENDIX:

Inspector Chris SADLER	
CW SOUTH SNT	
Sergeant St James	
Paul	Hamilton
St James Ward (8 PC, 1 PCSO)	
Savelly	Lukashenko
Andrew	Chippindale
Russell	Gibson
Alysha	Hattan
Elizabeth	Waudby
Samuel	Cosham
Jordan	Lewis
Anthony	Skidmore
Sergeant West End	
Mark	Pettit
West End Ward (8 PC, 1 PCSO)	
Ewa	Palega
Simangaliso	Mthembu
Edon	Gashi
Anderson	De Santis
Chrispin	Kamara-Johnson
Matthew	Carr
Jack	Scott
Brendan	Daly
John	Turner
Sergeant Pimlico North & Pimlico South	
Simon	Alexander
Pimlico North Ward (3 PC, 2 PCSO)	
Sophie	Cooper
Clement	Oluwalana
Jabeir	Ahmed
Pimlico South Ward (3 PC, 1 PCSO)	
John	Donaldson
Alex	Bisset
Luke	Toms
Gariba	Skinner
Sergeant K&B and Vincent Square	
David	Rowsell
Knightsbridge and Belgravia Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)	
David	Alford
Aadil	Baqar
Zack	Slaney
Vincent Square Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)	
Maisie	Bremer-Smith
Alex	Bird

Inspector Al PHILLIPS

CW NORTH SNT 1		
Sergeant Hyde Park, MHS, Regents Park		
PS	Martin	Noon
Hyde Park Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO) enhanced 3DWO ward due to B&D		
PC	Harminder	Purewal
PC	Lewis	Best
PC	Adam	Oddy
PCSO	Angeliki	Pandi
Regents Park Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Bartosz	Nowicki
Regents Park Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Charlotte	Render
PC	Alice	Harman
PC	Jonathan	Loney
PCSO	Hayley	Gadian
Sergeant Bayswater, Lanc Gate, Westbourne		
APS	Samuel	Wilkinson
Bayswater Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Dragos	Melega
PC	Tom	Pache
PCSO	Chris	Dudzic
Lancaster Gate Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Zachariah	Ali
PC	Hermengild	Sealy
PCSO	Mahmood	Khushi
Westbourne Ward (3 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Richard	Lewis
PC	Samuel	Wilkinson
PC	Justiniano	Gomes Junior
PC	Sujon	Miah
PCSO	Syed	Kazmi
Sergeant Abbey Road, Church Street, Little Venice		
PS	Kieron	McDade
Abbey Road Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Justin	Rowe
PCSO	Adem	Tanrikulu
Church Street Ward (4 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Ellis	Joseph
PC	Dylan	Richards
PC	Akeem	Greenidge
PCSO	Adam	Sloane
Little Venice Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Christopher	Barton
PC	Paul	Reading
PCSO	Garreth	Grant
Sergeant Harrow Rd, Queens Pk, Maida Vale		
PS	Paul	Wardlaw
Harrow Road Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	James	Pullen
PC	Ioana-Lorena	Bozedean

PCSO	Chevelle	Nyankumah
	Ellie	Bowman
Queens Park Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	David	Hammond
PC	Louis	Langford
PCSO	Hetty	Scott-Denness
Maida Vale Ward (2 PC, 1 PCSO)		
PC	Ben	Wiltshre
PC	Abdul	Zoobi
PCSO	Nick	Rosling