

Children and Adults, Public Health and Voluntary Sector Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date: June 2023

Portfolio: Young People, Learning and Leisure

The Report of: Councillor Tim Roca, Cabinet Member for Young People Learning and Leisure

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1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 28 February 2023

- No decisions were made

2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date of the administration

3. Children's Services

3.1 Increase in Children Missing from Home and Missing from Care

In the past few months, there has been a rise in the number of incidents of children going missing from home or care, with 51 episodes in February, 42 in March and 51 in April. By comparison there were 22 incidents in January. All children are contacted following going missing to understand why, to assess risk and to address difficulties they are experiencing. When we have spoken to children going missing the most common reasons given are family conflict, peer relationships and issues relating to criminal and sexual exploitation.

We have a dedicated Missing Children Lead within Family Services who oversees all incidents of children going missing from home and care. There is strong partnership working with agencies and high-risk cases are escalated quickly with the police and within social care. The vast majority of children go missing for between 24-72 hours. When children do go missing this is closely tracked until they return, we have a good understanding of why they go missing and tailored interventions are provided to families to address risk and difficulties.

3.2 Increased Demand and Complexity of cases in Children's Social Care

A paper shared with the Policy and Scrutiny Committee in April 2023 highlighted the increased demand for Children's Social Care both in numbers of service users, complexity and severity. The number of children accessing Early Help has continued to rise, with 16% more children accessing this service compared to the same time last year. In April 2023, 719 children were on Child in Need (CIN) plans, which is a 17.5% rise compared with 612 CIN plans in April 2022. Although social care referrals in April are slightly lower than in previous months, we are still seeing a comparatively high numbers of referrals when compared to previous years and increased levels of complexity, meaning that cases typically require more attention by practitioners.

3.3 Launch of 'We Got U, U Got This' Emotional Wellbeing and Mental health campaign, created by and for local young residents in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea

One of the priorities in the Bi-Borough Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Plan 2022-24 was to proactively signpost our local mental health services, responding to feedback from young people, parents, and schools/youth settings that the support offer can be confusing. We have been working with our youth networks and marketing agency, Nerd's Collective, to design a dynamic youth-led mental health campaign in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea, which went live in April. The purpose of this campaign is to empower and reassure young residents so that they feel confident accessing services to support their mental wellbeing, particularly our early intervention services such as Mind and Kooth. This campaign is made up of various elements, including the launch of a new landing page for mental health services, co-produced videos to explain services on offer and a phased in-person engagement across various youth settings. We have employed a local young video officer who has been leading a team of young people to co-produce signposting videos with mental health services. Young people will continue to lead the online and offline campaign over the next 3-months, including our young ambassadors.

3.4 Update on Primary and Secondary School Offers in Westminster

Parents were sent an email with the outcome of their application for Primary school on Monday 17 April 2023. Key points include:

- The resident application cohort of 1010 has decreased by 0.8% this year compared to last year when 1018 applications were received. This is as expected and part of a London-wide trend, and we are addressing this by working with schools to reduce Pupil Admission Numbers (PANS) across the borough.
- 82% of submissions to Westminster primary schools were made by Westminster residents. This is the same percentage as last year.
- The percentage of first preferences offered is 85.8%, compared to 87.2% last year. The percentage of families offered one of their top three preferences is 95.4%, compared to 96.4% last year. The total percentage of Westminster resident applicants offered one of their chosen schools remains high at 97.3%.
- 27 applicants did not receive an offer for one of their preferred schools. They have been allocated 'alternative offers' and given a list of schools with availability (or only a short waiting list) so they can consider applying for further schools.
- There is a consultation underway regarding a proposal to amalgamate St Stephen's and St Mary Magdalene. As this has not been finalised, anyone who has been offered St Stephen's will receive a custom offer letter to highlight the proposal.

Parents were sent an email with the outcome of their application for Secondary schools on National Offer Day, 1 March 2023. Key points include:

- The resident application cohort has decreased by 6.7% with 1008 on-time applications this year compared to the previous year of 1081.
- The percentage of first preferences offered is 70.9% compared to the previous year at 68.6%. 91.5% of applicants received an offer for one of their top three preferences, which is an increase from last year (88.3%).
- This year in Westminster, 85.84 per cent of parents and carers received their first choice of secondary school, and 94.5% received an offer at one of their preferred schools.

- After the offer process, there were 56 Westminster children that were unsuccessful in their chosen preferred school(s). The schools with vacancies at the end of the process were Marylebone Boys School, Westminster City School and St Augustine's High School.
- The 18 unplaced boys have been allocated an alternative offer at either Marylebone Boys School or Westminster City School based on proximity. The remaining 38 unplaced girls have been allocated an alternative offer at either St Augustine's High School or Fulham Cross Girls' School (in H&F). All of the applicants receiving 'alternative offers' will also be provided with a list of schools more likely to have availability in neighbouring boroughs, along with advice on the waiting list and appeal process.
- As is historically the case, movement on waiting lists, and parents declining offers in favour of independent schools, will enable further offers to be made for schools of preference between the end of March and start of September.

3.5 Update on Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) Programme

Over the 2023 Easter holidays, 39 providers reached 1,390 children and young people, through the DfE Funded HAF Programme. 961 FSM eligible children took part in a diverse programme of activities, ranging from sports camps (football, basketball, boxing, table tennis), arts and crafts, music and dance, sewing, adventure play, gardening, cooking, nature skills, youth club and offsite trips. Initial feedback is that the provision was a great success, with Children and Young people enjoying the chance to make new friends, try something new and benefit from a healthy meal.

Additional funding has enabled Westminster to provide a holiday offer, with food, in May 2023 Half term, in partnership with The Grosvenor/Westminster Foundation. 28 providers will be offering 1,082 places per day.

Preparation is underway for the Summer 2023 HAF Programme. Again, an exciting programme of activities is being developed, across the borough, so there is a fun-packed summer offer for children and young people in the borough of Westminster. 41 providers will be offering 1,500 places per day for a minimum of 16 days, and it is anticipated that 24,000 meals will be delivered throughout the summer holidays.

3.6 Update on Bayswater Children's Centre

The reopening of Bayswater Children's Centre is a key pledge under the council's Fairer Westminster agenda. The first phase of the reopening, the basement area of Bayswater Children's Centre, happened on Tuesday 18th April and families can now access a mix of universal stay and play services for children aged 0-5 and targeted services including ESOL classes for parents with their children over 3 days in the week (Tuesday to Thursday). An official launch event for families took place on the 2nd May attended by the Leader, the Lead Member for Young People, Learning and Leisure, local Ward Councillors and key partners. The 0-5 services are delivered as part of the Queens Park Family Hub, run by the Queens Park Federation. The sessions will enable children to learn, play and sing, contributing to their overall health and wellbeing and preparing older children to start school.

3.7 Anticipated Inspection for Youth Offending Services and our work to address disproportionality

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) was last inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in 2015 when it was part of the Tri-Borough Youth Offending Service alongside the Royal Borough of

Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF). Both RBKC and LBHF have been inspected individually in 2021 and 2022. Anticipating that the announcement of an inspection is likely to be imminent, Westminster YOS along with the Youth Crime Partnership Board and partners in the Local Authority have been undergoing preparation for when the announcement takes place alongside taking learning from other boroughs that have been recently inspected to inform practice and procedure locally.

The YOS has been working to tackle disproportionality in their work and have designed and implemented a Disproportionality Action Plan (DAP). This plan encompasses a range of work including partnering with the Metropolitan Police to address the disproportionate representation of Black children in Stop and Searches; working with School boards to understand disproportionality in school exclusions; and training staff in Anti-racist practice, cultural competency and multi-dimensional racism. The service is also working to prevent disproportionality through its work with Black Fathers which seeks to explore how practitioners work with fathers and how we can improve our engagement with men.

3.8 Update on the Consultation on the restructuring of Libraries staff

The bi-borough Library Service are currently undergoing a consultation on a proposed staffing restructure. The overall aim of the proposal is for the service to be more cost effective (including more streamlined management arrangements) and to lend itself to greater collaboration, working across the Councils and wider communities. The proposal relates to the Libraries part of the function and does not include the Archives team or the Collections and Resources team. The proposal takes into account a range of staff feedback, in particular the need for the reintroduction of the Librarian role which provides career development for front-line Library Officers and enables the service to have greater links to the community.

The proposed changes will reduce the overall staffing cost of the bi-borough service from £8.282m to £7.852m delivering an overall reduction in cost of £0.430m. The consultation opened on 17 April and will run until the end of May. The outcome of the consultation will be published on 8 June, with the selection of ringfenced staff taking place in June and July. To enable the transition to the proposed structure, a transition plan is being developed to ensure staff are equipped with the tools required to do their job and the process of learning and development will be ongoing.

3.9 Support to Schools rated as 'Requires Improvement' (as requested by the Committee)

We are proud that 93% of maintained schools in Westminster are currently rated as 'Good' (61%) or 'Outstanding' (32%) by Ofsted. There are currently three schools that are rated as 'requiring improvement' within the borough— St Augustine's Primary, St Peter's Eaton Square Primary and St George's Hanover Square. All have secure leadership in place and are making positive progress with improving the quality of education. Our School Standards team works closely with these schools, providing additional support to them. This includes:

- Additional advice given to Headteachers by our Lead Advisor.
- Brokering additional external support to the school which might be for example engaging a practitioner from another school to share and embed best practice or bringing in an education consultant.

- Help the school to establish a strong monitoring framework for the improvement plan, including the setup a School Improvement Board, which we sit on alongside school governors, to ensure there is sufficient challenge and progress.

The School Inspection Framework makes it clear that during inspections, the inspectors are looking for partnership working and sharing of practice and see this as a positive thing. We have had positive feedback from Ofsted about our close partnership working with schools and the dioceses.

There have been two schools recently inspected by Ofsted who were previously ranked as Outstanding and have received the rating of 'Good'; Hampden Gurney CE Primary School and St Augustine's CE High School. It is worth noting that these schools have not been inspected for 14 years and 16 years respectively, during which time there have been various changes to the inspection framework, which is now more robust, and difficult to achieve a rating of Outstanding. Both schools have various elements that were judged as 'Outstanding'.

3.10 Availability of nursery placements across the borough (as requested by the committee)

It is difficult to get the full picture on the available nursery placements across the borough as vacancy data for private, voluntary and independent schools is not available because they aren't on Ofsted's Early Years Register. The number of available places shown in Table 1 below outline the total estimated number of places at early years providers located in the ward, based on capacity registered with Ofsted (for private providers) and prior roll numbers (for state schools). The funded pupils include two-year-olds in receipt of targeted funding and three- and four-year-olds taking up the universal entitlement in nursery.

A few of the ward percentages are distorted by private schools that have funded pupils but which are not included in the capacity estimate. The biggest is Little EIFA nursery in West End, but there is also, for example, Naima Jewish Prep in Maida Vale and St John's Wood Prep in Regents Park. This effect is only really noticeable when looking at providers based in each ward like this: even EIFA's 47 children represent less than 1% of places at borough-level.

Table 1: Availability of Nursery Places in each ward

Places in each ward

Cluster	Ward	Providers	Est. available places	Funded nursery places	% Places funded
North West	Bayswater	9	256	89	35%
North West	Harrow Road	11	228	125	55%
North West	Hyde Park	6	305	122	40%
North West	Lancaster Gate	5	210	94	45%
North West	Little Venice	6	229	98	43%
North West	Maida Vale	8	225	112	50%
North West	Queen's Park	14	279	137	49%
North West	Westbourne	13	224	129	58%
North East	Abbey Road	9	293	75	26%
North East	Church Street	13	365	277	76%
North East	Marylebone	7	278	118	42%
North East	Regent's Park	9	344	88	26%
South	Knightsbridge & Belgravia	12	568	160	28%
South	Pimlico North	5	134	72	54%
South	Pimlico South	12	325	190	58%
South	St James's	13	427	80	19%
South	Vincent Square	9	193	92	48%
South	West End	3	186	111	60%
Total		164	5,069	2,169	43%

3.11

Westminster Youth Council

Westminster Youth Council (WYC) is an inclusive and diverse platform for 11–18-year olds (up to 25 for young people with SEND) who live or study in Westminster to come together and discuss the that affect the lives of young people in Westminster.

After a recent election, the Youth Council is delighted to welcome its newest Member of Youth Parliament (MYP), Myra Soni, 15. Myra's priorities as a Youth MP are mental health, the climate crisis, and diversity and inclusion. Myra joins James Balloqui, 17, and together they will act as the voice of young people of Westminster, take part in the UK Youth Parliament and will work directly with key decision makers in the Council to help influence and shape local services for young people.

4. Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES)

4.1 WAES Strategic Plan 2023-28

The WAES Strategic Plan 2023-28 has been developed through consultation with key stakeholders. It goes live in June 2023 and will be reviewed on an annual basis. If the business cycle allows, it is proposed that the WAES Plan will be an item at a future committee or that the team will hold an ad-hoc briefing session for the committee. This will provide members with an insight to the priorities that WAES will be addressing over the coming years, as well as the opportunity to help shape the proposed Partnership Development Plan, which will build on current WAES initiatives that support the delivery of the Fairer Westminster Strategy.

4.2 New and Expanding Curriculum Offer to Meet Business Growth Needs

WAES has introduced two new programmes to its portfolio to meet skills needs and to target courses at those most disadvantaged that would not normally be able to pay for commercial programmes. The first is Digital Marketing Level 2 which started in April 2023 with 12 new learners. The second is a PRINCE2 Project Management programme, which is due to start in June 2023 with 12 learners. Both programmes will equip participants with skills that are in high demand by employers and will therefore lead to better progression into work.

4.3 WAES Learner Graduation

The WAES graduation event was held on 17 April 2023 for over 40 learners and guests who had participated in one of our Amazon Web Services and Full Stack digital bootcamps, and from our first teacher training programme. The event was attended by the Lord Mayor, who congratulated the learners and handed out the certificates. We also heard from employers (Robert Half Recruitment Specialists and The Code Institute) who have been supporting the programmes. Learners spoke about the impact of the programme on their careers and lives. Many of the learners have already secured permanent employment as a result of attending the bootcamps.

5. Leisure

5.1 Leisure Centre pre-paid membership numbers

- April 2023 reported the highest number of pre-paid members across the contract at 20,800. This is the highest recorded since March 2020.
 - Six centres reported increased membership between March and April 23. Following a decrease in March 23, Porchester reported consistent number of pre-paid members.
 - Little Venice pre-paid members continues to decrease with April reporting just 922 pre-paid members. This is the lowest number of pre-paid members recorded. However, it is unclear at this stage why this is as there have been no major changes to the service. The site team are increasing marketing efforts to support the growth.
- A positive overall % change for pre-paid memberships was reported in April 23 at 101%/+1% membership compared to the same period in 2019/20.
 - Four centres averaged positive percentage change in pre-paid members for April 23: Paddington Recreation Ground (+42%), Porchester (+11%), Queen Mother (+4%) and Moberly (+9%) compared to 2019/20.
 - Whilst Little Venice reported the lowest number of pre-paid members for April 23 (922), % change margins are smaller due to low numbers of pre-paid members pre-pandemic averaging (1,285 through the 2019/20 financial year)
 - Marshall Street remains the centre with the lowest recovery across the financial year in pre-paid members compared to 2019/20 at an average of -51%. Marshall street pre-paid members are over 1,000 lower for April 23 (2,029) compared to April 19 (3,273)

5.2 Seymour Leisure Centre

Seymour Leisure Centre development is currently in for planning permission with a decision expected in Summer 2023. Recommendations from the planning board will be considered on receipt. The centre is planned for closure in the first quarter of 2024 and planning has began to demobilise the centre and relocate sessions and providers to other sites, with minimal disruption.

6. Culture

6.1 West End LIVE

Our annual showcase of musical theatre will be taking place again this year over the 17/18 June in Trafalgar Square. Plans are well underway with over thirty West End shows now having signed up to participate at the event. Raising sponsorship has been challenging and as a result, the council has increased its annual contribution to support the event which is a key fixture in London's cultural calendar and at the heart of the council's cultural strategy. We are once again working alongside The Society of London Theatre with whom we Co-Produce the event and who has managed to secure some additional financial support from the theatre community.

6.2 Temple Roof Gardens

The council has partnered with local art curators based at Somerset House, Colab, to transform the public space above Temple underground station with a series of public art projects funded through Section 106 and neighbourhood CIL funding. The latest commission for The Artist's Garden is a new installation, Slackwater, by Holly Hendry that will launch in July.

6.3 Donmar Warehouse School Tour

Donmar Warehouse are being funded with £25k from the council's Culture Fund Commissioning Strand and corporate sponsors to take an adaptation of Shakespeare's Henry V to secondary schools across Westminster targeting key stage 3 pupils. The productions will take place in school halls this summer and will reach up to 1,500 children. Donmar have confirmed the following schools and are in discussions with others: Westminster City, St Marylebone, Pimlico Academy, Greycoat Hospital, King Solomon Academy, St George's, Paddington Academy, Marylebone Boy's School.

6.4 Harrow Road Art Commissions

The Harrow Road public art panel have selected Steve Shaw from Paddington Arts to create a series of photographic mural panels on the Fernhead Road wall outside Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee school for children with learning difficulties. This is the first in a new series of two-year rotating art works which are part of the Harrow Road regeneration programme. The panel will also be selecting two further permanent art works sites opposite Queen's Park Library on the canal and outside Grand Junction near the canal path.

6.5 Community Gallery Exhibition Programme

An exhibition of art by local Ukrainian schoolchildren opened in May in the mezzanine gallery, 64 Victoria Street, organised by St Mary's supplementary school in Kensington who have recently expanded to accommodate large amounts of Ukrainian children since the start of the war.

Alison Smith from Unison is working with the I&C Communities team to create a Windrush exhibition for June and July to commemorate its 75th anniversary. The first part of the exhibition will be sculptures made by a Westminster resident and artist, Carl Gabriel, based at the Yaa Centre. In July there will be an exhibition of PRIDE carnival costumes made by LGBT+ artist, Clover Nash, whose grandfather was heavily involved in the Notting Hill Carnival.

6.6 Green Plaques

A plaque unveiling took place at the Edwardian Hampshire Hotel in Leicester Square in March to mark the site of the former Royal Dental Hospital. Formal approval of a plaque to mark the site of Café Monico in Piccadilly Circus is in progress and a plaque to commemorate Sir Hugh Casson has been approved and is in production. The Green Plaque panel has informally approved a submission to commemorate Stanley Tse's contribute to Chinatown.

6.7 City of Sculpture

Sister by David Breuer-Weil was installed in Hanover Square Gardens and Khadine by the artist Bruno Catalano was installed in Riverside Walk Garden in January. The City of Sculpture panel has informally approved additional sculptures ahead of formal planning permission including Tree of Life by Isabel Langtry in Berkeley Square Gardens, Relatum-Circle & Straight by Lee Ufan in Hanover Square Gardens and Langston by Jason Boyd Kinsella in Riverside Walk Gardens. The Anthony James sculpture, Triacontahedron is due to be removed from Berkeley Square in July.