



City of Westminster

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

Date: 27 July 2023

Portfolio: Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary Sector

The Report of: Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis

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1. No key decisions have been made in the period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 12 June 2023.

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

Adult Social Care and Public Health

2.1 Learning Disability accommodation services and day services

2.1.1 The Council is in the process of preparing its Housing, Care and Support Framework. Officers have worked with service users to shape the specification for this contract, which is being tendered in September 2023 and will go live in April 2024.

2.1.2 The contract will unify a group of currently disparate contracts for supported living, floating support, and short breaks. This approach will allow the Council to manage services within a standard rate for the provision of specialist care. It will also feature geographical clusters, helping to manage the market more effectively and allowing staff from one organisation to work across sites easily, as needed.

2.1.3 The Lisson Grove Hub programme is also continuing to move ahead and includes within its scope the reprovision of Community Access Westminster services. Officers are continuing to explore the best future options for the location of those services, with a clear proviso that whatever the next step, it must bring them together and be an improvement on the existing settings.

2.1.4 We have also secured some additional investment for our learning disability services so that an offer can be created for those residents who are not eligible for council funded support, but for whom education, training and employment – and community networking opportunities are very beneficial. This is in addition to excellent existing offers for these residents, such as the hub provided by LDN London on Harrow Road.

2.2 Mental Health digital platform

- 2.2.1 A user-friendly platform for all residents' health and wellbeing needs will be developed to sign post them to local provision and support. It will advocate people to make better choices to promote mental wellbeing through the five ways to wellbeing. The platform will be geared towards preventative interventions, encouraging people to seek support before reaching a crisis point.
- 2.2.2 The platform will be launch by the end of March 2024. Current work is centred on engaging with communities to ensure the resource is accessible, informative, and interactive. The platform will be co-produce with residents and communities.

2.3 Gordon Hospital

- 2.3.1 In March 2020, Central and North West London NHS Trust (CNWL) temporarily closed the Gordon Hospital, which was the only in-patient psychiatric care service for Westminster residents in need of specialist mental health provision. The reason given for the temporary closure was COVID-19 related concern. Patients were moved to other out-of-borough hospitals, and some were discharged back into the community.
- 2.3.2 CNWL has still not held a consultation on the Gordon Hospital's closure. It is likely that the formal consultation will start in September or October 2023. It has been made clear to CNWL's senior leaders that keeping the Gordon Hospital open or replacing acute inpatient beds in Westminster must be included in the consultation options.
- 2.3.3 The Gordon Hospital's closure has left Westminster with zero beds available in the borough for residents who require in-patient care, adding further pressure across the wider health and care system. Care in the community is not the only solution for people who need for specialist care, and there will always be a need for in-patient beds.
- 2.3.4 Earlier in July I issued a joint statement with the Leader of the Council calling on the NHS to reopen the acute mental health beds at the Gordon while maintaining the community mental health care offer. We also raised the issue of long waits for care, and patients being placed outside Westminster, with additional pressure therefore being placed on patients and their families.

2.4 Better Care Fund

- 2.4.1 The Bi-borough Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan has not yet been submitted because three days before the 28 June 2023 submission deadline, the North West London (NWL) Integrated Care Board commenced a review of BCF schemes for all eight NWL boroughs. This is expected to be completed by 31 July 2023. A significant proportion of

the Plan had been developed and was agreed at the 8 June meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board. I have written, with the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health at the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, to the National BCF Team and NHS NW London on this and the disruption that this has caused, with a view to resolving this by 31 July 2023.

2.5 Global Majority Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

- 2.5.1 Health data for Westminster shows that the more deprived an area is, the less healthy its residents are likely to be. Residents from ethnically diverse and global majority groups, and particularly residents from a Black ethnic background, are most likely to have poorer health outcome. To inform action that tackles inequalities, officers are finalising a needs assessment on the health inequalities that Westminster's Global Majority communities experience.
- 2.5.2 Between March-April 2023, the Public Health and Communities teams contacted specific voluntary and community sector groups in Westminster, such as the BME Health Forum and the Maida Vale Caribbean Men's dominoes club. Officers sought to understand the link between culture, health and people's experiences of systemic racism or discrimination.
- 2.5.3 Early results have confirmed that people might face specific barriers to accessing the health services they need, such as discrimination, challenges navigating the health system, poor service user experiences and outcomes, and accessible discussions about health conditions.
- 2.5.4 Learning will be shared internally to help influence council-wide programmes, before the JSNA's autumn. The insights are also helping to refine services due to be imminently commissioned, such as the Integrated Healthy Lifestyle service. Work is also underway to understand the collective impact of the initiatives on addressing health inequalities.

2.6 Community Health and Wellbeing Workers pilot

- 2.6.1 The pilot is a joint scheme between the Council, The Marven GP Practice and Milbank Medical Centre. It is being evaluated by Imperial College London. The programme aims to provide regular, proactive outreach to households in the area, building relationships and identifying and responding to needs in a way that works for residents.
- 2.6.2 Central London Healthcare GP Federation is looking to fund the programme beyond the pilot stage and is currently exploring its expansion in the south of the borough with the Abbey Centre and Paddington Development Trust in the north of the borough. The Public Health team will look to support this transition and the programme's growth, development and business as usual activities.

2.6.3 The pilot was shortlisted for the MJ achievement awards 2023 for tackling health inequalities and was cited as a best practice case study in the Fuller Stocktake Report.

2.7 Launch of new Community Champions apprenticeship scheme

2.7.1 The new Community Champions apprenticeship scheme will complement the five existing Community Champions schemes that support a network of 100 volunteers. The new apprenticeship scheme will offer new pathways into employment for and upskill champions, and it will increase capacity within the existing champions projects. All the champions are local residents.

2.7.2 The scheme launched in May 2023 with residents, directly employed by Champions project suppliers, commencing their 15-month apprenticeship placements. It has been a promising start, with positive feedback received from learners. The lessons learned from this cohort will support future intakes on to the scheme.

2.8 Supporting Healthy Weight

2.8.1 The Council was successful in its School Superzone bid for £30,000 from the Greater London Authority to support a partnership centred around Edward Wilson School in Westbourne to improve health and wellbeing. The Superzone will focus on increasing active travel, improving road safety around the school and improving personal safety and increasing access to and use of local green spaces. The next step is to work with the partnership group to agree an action plan. The group includes the school and the Council's parks, leisure and community safety teams. The Superzone partnership group will also link with the North Paddington Programme to ensure work is joined up for maximum impact.

2.8.2 In South Pimlico, the Public Health and Housing teams' collaboration (including Public Health investment) has resulted in an urban greening project. The project has installed 11 raised beds on the Churchill Gardens estate. Residents, youth centre facilitators and schools have access to the site. In addition, food growing workshops have been held with St Gabriel's School, Millbank Academy and Churchill Gardens, reaching more than 200 young people.

2.9 Childrens and Young People's Drug Strategy

2.9.1 The Council has published the CYP Drugs Strategy outlining recommendations and actions. The strategy can be found here: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health/childhood-health#alcohol-and-substance-misuse>.

2.9.2 The Strategy focusses on CYP who are using illegal drugs, parental substance misuse and "hidden harm", and CYP who are involved (and/ or to be exploited) with the supply and dealings of drugs.

2.9.3 Some key recommendations officers have been working on are:

1. Recruiting “hidden harm” and family/friend workers in our Public Health- commissioned young people wellbeing drugs service, which specialises in substance misuse and supports CYP impacted by familial/parental substance misuse);
2. Launching the Black and Blue project in schools, a role model substance misuse/mental health project working with the Archives team and the Paul Canoville foundation;
3. Establishing a Combating Drugs Partnership to drive the wider agenda forward including adult drug users and the rough sleeping population; and
4. Developing a nitrous oxide campaign over the summer with insight around education and minimising risk.

2.10 Visit to Beechcroft

2.10.1 On 20 June I visited the Dementia Project, operated by AgeUK Westminster, at Beechcroft House. This visit enabled me to witness the work and outreach done by the Dementia Project, and the relationships they have built with service users.

Voluntary Sector

2.11 Community Investment Strategy

2.11.1 The first stage of implementation has started with the development of Core Grants. Discussion sessions have been held with Westminster Community Network and the BME Health Forum, with positive suggestions about how to shape the application process. The next stage is to develop the guidelines and prepare support sessions to be able to open the Fund in September.

2.12 Community Grants Funding

2.12.1 £600,000 has been awarded through the Community Priorities Programme to 43 organisations (and 8 individuals) in 12 wards. Bids were reviewed by panels formed of residents and community organisations. The funded projects include activities such as boxing, steelpan workshops, community planting, Zumba, children’s pottery, among others. Of the awarded funding, 84% went to organisations, and 16% to individuals developing new projects.

2.12.2 Once the issuing of contracts to the successful projects has been completed, the team will then start to gather feedback from providers and residents who took part in the scoring to evaluate the process.

2.12.3 The timeline for the next round of the Communities Priorities Programme is to complete the community participation this financial year, with the awarding of grants April 2024.

2.13 Westminster Connects

2.13.1 We celebrated National Volunteers week with a picnic for our most active volunteers. Volunteers supported the Trooping the Colour preparations, West End Live, WCC Blue Cross Dog Show and South West Fest and the Community Coronation event. We supported the One Westminster Volunteer Fair with over 200 residents attending and 30 organisations represented. We are having early conversations with Childrens' Services about developing a volunteer handyperson service.

2.13.2 Give 16 staff volunteers recruited for the Street count for the Rough Sleeping team. Language Cafes in City Hall and Lisson Grove continued on a weekly basis with staff support.

2.14 #2035

2.14.1 To support the organisation with how we will work differently to support the #2035 vision to reduce health inequalities, we are developing a communication video and plan, the 'Change Makers' programme to support the Council and partners to build relationships with communities and develop co-production skills.

2.15 Visit to Advance

2.15.1 On 10 July I visited Advance, a charity that supports women and girls who have experienced domestic abuse or the criminal justice system. They provide a range of support, from advocacy to practical advice. Advance is part of the Angelou Partnership, which is supported by Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham.