



City of Westminster

**Communities, City Management
and Air Quality Policy and Scrutiny
Committee**

Date:	31 July 2023
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 the last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 15 June 2023:

No decisions have been made during this period.

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

2.1 Public Protection & Licensing

Crime & Disorder and Community Safety

Safer Westminster Partnership

Councillors will know from the insight gained at the last meeting that the Safer Westminster Partnership is structured around a three-year strategy document. I was pleased to attend a workshop with a range of stakeholders as we start the process of re-defining the priorities for the new strategy.

Before we started to think about the emerging priorities, we spent some time reflecting on the various drivers and performance challenges that are faced as a community safety partnership, as well as addressing the lived experiences of our residents and businesses.

The Safer Westminster Partnership has committed to ongoing workshops with a number of stakeholders before bringing forward a draft strategy for consultation.

New Violence Duty

The Government passed the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act in April 2022, which introduced the Serious Violence Duty, which requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence. The duty commenced on 31st January 2023 and Specified Authorities (Police, Probation, Fire, Health and Local Authorities) have until 31 January 2024 to comply with the Duty.

London's Violence Reduction Unit has produced a standard definition for the boroughs to

adopt for 'serious violence':

- Any violence and exploitation affecting young people under the age of 25
- Domestic abuse (as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021)
- Sexual violence

Partnerships have flexibility in the definition they choose to adopt and Westminster has chosen to also include Night Time Economy driven violence by over 25's in the West End, as this makes up a large proportion of Westminster's serious violence.

Key outputs for the duty are to produce a serious violence strategic needs assessment and a serious violence strategy by 31st January 2024. Work is underway led by Community Safety to ensure compliance with the Duty. The Safer Westminster Partnership has chosen to include these within the wider SWP strategic assessment and strategy which is under development.

Establishing a Westminster Safer Neighbourhoods Board

I have asked Officers to liaise with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) to ensure we deliver for our communities a new Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB) for Westminster. SNBs are one way in which communities hold policing areas to account and can access community funding from MOPAC for community led initiatives.

I will be working with colleagues across services to ensure we develop a truly representative board.

CCTV

I am pleased to confirm that officers have completed the procurement of consultants to examine the current surveillance infrastructure across Westminster. The consultant has been tasked with analysing current CCTV systems available in the city and examining opportunities to improve coordination and coverage.

This will enable us to demonstrate leadership across the various services that are already established across our city. Work is due to start the week commencing 24th July, and the initial work commission is anticipated to take 10-12 weeks, and will help to inform our future opportunities and conversations.

Once we receive the recommendations from the consultants which we anticipate in the early Autumn, I will be able to update the Committee further.

Night Safety Programme

The Night Stars have helped 84 people in quarter 1. There are 62 Night Stars volunteers registered and following some community events a further 44 people have registered an interest in volunteering. Overall, we have seen a 6% increase against the baseline of volunteering in this space – ensuring we continue to make Westminster Safe into the night-time.

In addition to the night-time volunteering, the team have also attended 14 events, facilitate 8 training sessions, participated in one volunteer fair, and delivered 5 promotional

presentations.

As well as patrolling the West End regularly on Friday nights, the Night Stars delivered a special shift for Pride, running from 8pm-4am, helping those celebrating in the West End to keep safe.

A New Met for London

This was launched on 17 July by the Commissioner, and details the MPS mission to deliver *More Trust, Less Crime and Higher Standards*. Community Safety will be working closely with the Borough Command Unit to shape and influence the local plans for its delivery, ensuring it reflects the needs of our communities and providing appropriate challenge and support in its delivery. I will be looking to work with the MPS to ensure that their community engagement and dialogue around this is supported by our own communication and engagement channels.

I am working to continue to strengthen our relationship with local policing leaders, and as part of my work programme I have regular meetings with Westminster police leadership team to discuss both of our shared priorities, and the changes that are important to our residents.

Regulation and Enforcement

Pedicabs

Officers continue to undertake coordinated operations with the Metropolitan Police targeting anti-social and noisy pedicabs, predominantly in the West End which cause nuisance to businesses and residents. We have had notable success at court prosecuting pedicab riders under the Control of Pollution Act – the last court date saw three riders fined a total of £3290 adding to the approximately £33k achieved previously. The last joint operation in late May identified a further 8 riders playing amplified music past 9pm, and papers are being submitted for prosecution. The next joint operation is later this month, and there are court dates booked for August and September to hear existing cases.

Licensing

We continue to work towards a safer and more managed night-time economy. City inspectors have been carrying proactive visits to licensed premises across the West End and St James' ward to ensure that businesses are operating in accordance with their premises license and promoting the licensing objectives. As part of this work, several businesses have been identified who have not complied in full with licensing conditions and relevant action is being taken to rectify this. The city inspectors will continue to carry out this work in partnership with the police licensing team to ensure that businesses are aware of their responsibilities in terms of promoting and operating under the licensing objectives to create a safe space for visitors and reduce any issues that may impact our residents.

90% of total licences issued within 28 days from the publication date of the Licensing Sub-Committee decision (*yearly target of 80%*)

91% of licensed premises that are safe and well managed following a single inspection.

Notting Hill Carnival

The Council supports carnival each year by allocating temporary street trading pitches on two streets in the west of the city, Westbourne Park Road and Talbot Road. In total, there are 43 pitches available for the two days of carnival. The majority of these pitches provide hot food. We have already received applications for this year's carnival and we are currently processing these applications. The application process includes training for the traders so that they fully understand the requirements for trading at carnival. The training this year will be provided, in person, to the traders the week before carnival, by the licensing service and environmental health. This will be followed up by inspections of the pitches once they have been set up on the first day of carnival. Environmental Health officers will also be actively monitoring the noise levels from the six static sounds systems that operate within Westminster over the two days.

Ahead of Carnival, Community Safety, through the Integrated Gangs and Exploitation Unit will be leading the usual pre-carnival safeguarding and gang-activity reduction plans. These will be discussed and delivered with colleagues across Westminster Housing, Children's Services and our neighbouring boroughs.

British Summer Time (BST)

BST is an annual series of concerts in Hyde Park. It is organised by the Royal Parks under a premises licence which is heavily conditioned to manage the impact of the event. This year's concerts took place over three weekends from 24 June to 9 July. Nine events took place during that period with some of the biggest acts in the world performing in front of audiences of 65,000 people. Environmental Health had a permanent presence at each concert to ensure that all relevant requirements were adhered to including, food hygiene, health & safety, compliance with licenced conditions and most importantly noise monitoring. In granting the licence the council placed several conditions regarding noise from the events. Environmental Health officers worked closely with the event organisers for each concert to monitor the noise levels in real time and council staff are present and engage with the sound technicians to reduce the noise level when appropriate. Officers visited the location of any noise complaints and monitored noise levels from outside the park. We received 30 complaints this year over the course of the three weekends, all were offered a visit and monitoring took place in the vicinity of the complaint to ensure the conditions were being met.

Pavement Licenses

We continue to operate on trying to ensure that our pavement and licensing schemes can work for our business and our residents. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill makes provision for a new, permanent pavement licensing regime. The Bill is still progressing through its parliamentary stages and is unlikely to complete its passage in the current parliamentary session therefore, DLUHC has laid draft Regulations to extend the current temporary pavement licensing measures beyond September 2023. This will allow licences to be granted for up to an additional 12 months (until September 2024), pending the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill completing its parliamentary stages.

There are currently almost 700 Pavement Licences which will expire at the end of September.

PP&L Restructure

I have been updated on the changes to the PP&L service, and the progress that is being made in the implementation of a new operating structure. I have asked that we undertake sessions to brief ward members on these changes, and the service has committed to do this as soon as key appoints have been completed.

Quarter 1 Key Performance Indicators 2023/24

- 90% of total licences issued within 28 days from the publication date of the Licensing Sub-Committee decision (*yearly target of 80%*)
- 91% of licensed premises that are safe and well managed following a single inspection.
- 113 of Category 1 hazards removed from residential dwellings which pose a serious and immediate threat to people's health or safety. (*yearly target of 375*)
- 234 vulnerable residents supported to continue living in their homes (*yearly target of 500*)
- 88 Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) improved (buildings with more than one household including shared facilities) (*yearly target 200*)
- 6% Increase in the number of volunteers involved in our Night Stars Programme
- 100% of all high-risk food premises inspected (rated category A-B) as programmed for Quarter One (*yearly target 100%*)

2.2 Communities

Pride

Events leading up to pride included

'Windrush meets Pride' an exhibition in the mezzanine, showcasing the work of Clover a UAL final year student.

A public reading of 'nature's wild' understanding the link between the carnival protest and the pride.

A float making exhibition took place at City Hall, led by an artist. Members of the community came in to assist in decorating the float for the two Lord Mayors for the parade - in the theme of the monarch butterfly, representing the impact of climate change on our environment.

The staff networks Westminster Rainbow Network and RBKC Proud network delivered a joint event with Elimu Mas Academy, a Paddington based charity and Unison. 170 people attended the parade, many in costume. The pre-meet was hosted by staff at Mayfair library. The lord Mayors of City of Westminster, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea attended and sat in the float. The LGBTQ+ champions from both boroughs also attended on the float.

A photo from the event is below. Images from the event will be held by the Westminster Archives.

Communications Update

The photos from the Pride Parade have been shared on our social media channels and will be promoted in MyWestminster. A 'Pride meets Windrush' article appeared in the July additional the Voice magazine, highlighting the Council celebrating Pride month and the Pride parade, whilst also showcasing the designs of Clover from Central Saint Martin's whose work is displayed at City Hall and included at Pride in London.



North Paddington

- The North Paddington team have drafted the first year of works for the Programme. CPMO Project Leads have been assigned to each project and are actively working with a dedicated Partnership Board Lead/ Community representative to start the scoping requirements for each project.
- Work is ongoing to finalise the community and engagement approach, to ensure this is embedded into the delivery of each project. This is in partnership with members of the NPP Partnership Board.
- A Cabinet Member paper, which outlines the first year of works; the governance structure for the programme and the community engagement plan will be drafted for final approval for September 2023.

Engagement and Consultation

- The Consultation Hub is now live on the Council's website and features a number of current consultations.

- We are in the process of procuring a new Consultation Engagement platform which will be implemented from September 2023.
- A list of key stakeholder organisations across each ward has been produced and will be shared with Councillors shortly.
- Teams are engaging regularly with the Quality Improvement Board with an officer level operational meeting ahead of the Board to provide additional support.
- A Consultation How To guide is being developed with the Consultation Institute. This will be launched by the end of July 2023. This guide has key principles for staff to follow when approaching consultation. We are working also with Bloomberg Associates to deliver training sessions which will be based on their Engagement 'How To Guide'. The sessions will be delivered with Westminster staff from September 2023 – December 2023.
- The consultation on the Charter for Community Participation has been completed and a resident's working group is being established with residents to create the Charter for launch in summer 2023.

Community development

- Our Westminster, 131 residents have signed up. An increase of 26 since the last report. Participation activities:
- Residents invited to take part in selection of new consultation hub platform.
- Resident taking part in Public Participation at Full Council Meetings training. In partnership with the Governance and Councillor Liaison team, the Communities department held two online information sessions (during the day and in the evening) where we explained to residents and voluntary sector members what full council was and how they could get involved through submitting a question or petition. Over ten people attended both sessions. Following the sessions, a further eleven questions were submitted to full council, of a total of 19.
- Residents invited to New Approach to working with Communities conference at Grand Junction
- Career zone. The waiver for the contract with Abintegro Legal (enabling us to bypass the normal procurement process) has finally been approved.

CPP update -

- 46 have sent all their documents
- 21 PO's have been processed
- 34 contracts sent, 28 contracts signed
- 6 projects are individuals/students and will require payment before providing insurance certificates (proof of purchase must be shown within 7 days from receiving payments)

Equalities

- Training is underway on improving access to services, including using equality impact assessments as a tool to identify engagement priorities to widen participation.
- Scoping meetings are underway around the socioeconomic duty and how we embed that to support other work underway around housing, cost of living and food poverty.

Windrush

This year we marked the 75th anniversary of Windrush with a film festival held at Picturehouse Central in Piccadilly Circus. The event featured the documentary film 'Still We Rise', films from one thousand Londoners and Chocolate Films and 'Dolapo is Fine' directed by Ethosheia Hylton. Guests also saw performances from singer Peter Straker alongside St. Peter's Eaton

Square Church of England Primary school, British soul singer Omar, Queens of Lovers Rock Janet Kay and Carroll Thompson, Queen Laya and Heather Small. The event also brought together members of the community as well as Westminster residents who are part of the Windrush generation.

The event also showcased the designs of Clover from Central Saint Martin's whose work was showcased at City Hall and included on the road at Pride in London 2023.

Here is the Caribbean front room image.



Communications Update

Windrush 75 festival took place on Windrush Day 22 June. Event was sold out with many residents attending. Posted on social media throughout the day and had 18,000 organic impressions and a 3.4% engagement rate. Other events include party to celebrate the primary school art competition which took place in LM Parlour on 26 June, upcoming events are Library talk with artist Michael McMillan (promoting across our channels) and Windrush Compensation Scheme information event (will be promoting once details are confirmed).