

Date: 21 September 2023

Portfolio: Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary Sector

The Report of: Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis
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1. The following key decisions have been made in the period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 27 July 2023:

- 21 August - Direct award for interim contracts for Learning Disability accommodation based services
- 22 August - Achieving Health Equity: A proposal to launch a new Public Health partnership fund for voluntary and community organisations serving Westminster residents

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

2.1 Achieving Health Equity

2.1.1 Westminster has the highest life expectancy for males, and the third highest life expectancy for females in the country. It also has the highest life expectancy gap in the country for males between those living in affluent and deprived areas.

2.1.2 Health is principally driven by the circumstances in which people live – their income, housing, employment, environment, culture and relationships.

2.1.3 To build Fairer Communities, and deliver health equity, the Council needs to address the wider determinants of health, and ensure that its services are accessible and responsive to those with the greatest needs.

2.1.4 To complement the existing Healthy Lifestyles commissioned offer, Public Health intends to invest up to £5m over 4 years to strengthen the capacity, knowledge, skills and reach of the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to improve residents' health and wellbeing.

2.1.5 From 18 September 2023, VCS organisations serving Westminster residents will be invited to apply for funding to deliver regular health promoting activities for specified target communities of all ages. Organisations will also be able to access selected health promotion training which helps them deliver these activities and builds their long term expertise to deliver public health services.

2.1.6 Public Health will continue to co-design the future offer with organisations throughout the fund to develop their expertise in delivering public health outcomes.

2.2 **Gordon Hospital**

2.2.1 In March 2020, Central and North West London NHS Trust (CNWL) temporarily closed the Gordon Hospital due to COVID-19 concerns. It was the only in-patient psychiatric care service for Westminster residents in need of specialist mental health provision. Patients were moved to other out-of-borough hospitals, and some were discharged back into the community. 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.

2.2.2 CNWL's consultation is expected to launch its consultation in early October 2023, but CNWL has not confirmed the date yet. I attended CNWL's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 6 September to question CNWL about the closure's impact on residents with mental health needs.

2.2.3 I also visited St Charles Hospital in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to tour the Mental Health Crisis Assessment Service (MHCAS) and discuss patient flow with NHS colleagues.

2.2.4 There have been community events focussed on the Gordon Hospital. One of these was in June, which was attended by over 20 residents who expressed their concerns about the proposed closure. Another will be held on 18 September and co-hosted with Cllr Josh Rendall, the RBKC Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health. The purpose of these events was to make residents aware of the latest news about CNWL's plans for the future consultation on the Gordon Hospital's closure and discuss ongoing concerns about the lack of acute mental health inpatient facilities.

2.2.5 To further support efforts to understand how local communities are affected by the Gordon Hospital's closure, two independent reports are being prepared. The Advocacy Project's report will focus on service users and carers' experiences, and Professor Jill Manthorpe is conducting further in-depth analysis on the lack of inpatient acute beds in the borough.

2.3 **Better Care Fund**

2.3.1 The Better Care Fund (BCF) Plan for Westminster was submitted following the escalations with NHS London and the national BCF team. At this stage, officers do not anticipate there being any conditions applied to the Council's BCF bid.

2.3.2 The Council is still awaiting confirmation from the North West London (NWL) Integrated Care Board (ICB) on the review process, which includes the terms of reference. It is likely these will not be agreed within the timescale NWL and the Council outlined for meeting the budget setting deadlines, as the review is

planned to take three months to complete once the terms of reference have been agreed. However, the BCF was on the agenda for the 7 September Integrated Care Partnership seminar where the ICB Chief Executive committed to the joint work and for these to be formally signed off, preferably at the 3 October Health Accountability Board. The attendees are Cabinet Members, Leaders and ICB leaders. These meetings are helping to progress this and ensure the terms of reference are co-produced. Locally, officers are starting the review process for the Westminster-commissioned BCF schemes and will aim to have this completed by the end of September. An update on the BCF will be shared at the next Health and Wellbeing Board.

2.4 Community Champions

2.4.1 Planning is well underway now for this year's Community Champions Conference on 23 November 2023. The title and theme for this year is 'Community Champions present: Connected Healthy Communities', given the importance of the Champions and other community connector roles within the developing Integrated Care System and Place-based Partnership. This year the ambition is for the Council, as a central community partner, to host partners and decision-makers in this changing health and social care landscape.

2.4.2 The day aims to promote progress, share learning and explore new initiatives, and celebrate partnerships and achievements. The day's programme has been created from discussions with Champions and NHS, Council and voluntary sector colleagues and partners. The programme responds to all stakeholders' priorities.

2.4.3 Two of the five Westminster Community Champions contracts end in March 2024: Mozart in Queens Park ward and Church Street in Church Street ward. An open competitive tendering exercise is being planned for Autumn 2023, and the Procurement Strategy will soon progress to the Invitation to Tender stage.

2.5 Supporting Healthy Weight

2.5.1 In June 2023, 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. An action plan has now been developed in partnership with local stakeholders. The actions are aimed at improving community safety, road safety and access to green spaces for physical activity.

2.5.2 The action plan will be delivered over the 2023/24 school year. The actions that will be implemented first link to road safety and active travel. To co-design these, workshops will be held with the School Council and the wider school community of pupils, families, and local organisations.

2.6 Community Grants Funding

2.6.1 £600,000 has been awarded through the Community Priorities Programme to 43 organisations (and 8 individuals) in 12 wards as part of Round 2. Bids were reviewed by panels formed of residents and community organisations. 45 of

these projects have started and the remaining six are due to start in the coming months.

2.6.2 A key priority for Round 3 of the Community Grants Funding is for residents, ward councillors, the voluntary sector and officers to be involved in decision-making. The Round 2 awards were made following consultation with communities, and I have met with officers and Cllr Sanquest to discuss whether this should be continued for Round 3, or if a Participatory Budgeting approach should be followed. A Cabinet Member Decision for Round 3 will follow in the coming months.

2.7 **#2035**

2.7.1 Over the summer I met with officers from the Communities and Public Health teams, with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Licensing, on #2035, the next stages and to provide a steer.

2.7.2 The next stages for this are evidence gathering and external workshops. External workshops will help to identify key issues and barriers, generate case studies and develop an action plan. It is expected that the action plan/strategy will follow in late 2023/early 2024.