



City of Westminster

Children, Environment and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Monday 5th February 2018

Report of: Cllr David Harvey

Portfolio: Cabinet Member for Environment, Sports and Community

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1. Sports and Leisure

Active Westminster Strategy

- 1.1 The new Active Westminster strategy, 'Activate Your City, Lives & Neighbourhoods', is undergoing final design work, which will be released for Cabinet Member approval by 9th February 2018. It was recently soft launched at the ActiveWestminster Awards in December, with a preview of the new Active branding and design work.
- 1.2 At the end of November an ActiveWestminster Partnership was held with around 40 partners and stakeholders in attendance. The focus was given to the new strategy and update on new themes and ambitious aims over the next few years. This was well received and given the full backing of the Partnership.
- 1.3 Over the coming months the team will hold a number of smaller launch events to engage local communities and residents at locations and programmes that are already in existence featuring the new thematic areas. A new website, activity searcher and short animated films will be an integral part of these events, demonstrating how active opportunities will be accessed in the future.

ActiveWestminster Awards 2017

- 1.4 In December the annual ActiveWestminster Awards received 266 nominations across the 10 award categories. There were also over 170 people in attendance which made it the largest ActiveWestminster Awards yet. The event was sponsored by a number of partners and headlined by Everyone Active, Marylebone Cricket Club and Willmott Dixon. Local sporting icons Ashley McKenzie, from the world of Judo, and Olympic Gold Medallist for rowing, Constantine Louloudis, were also welcomed at the awards. The City of Westminster College once again did a fantastic job providing short films for the event and also provided video coverage and live images on the night.

Paddington Recreation Ground – Improvement work projects

- 1.5 Works to the Forest Garden have been completed and it is currently in use by the general public. A formal launch will take place in the early spring when the new planting scheme begins to bloom.
- 1.6 Ward funding has been obtained to help upgrade the existing village green lighting system which experienced a number of failures during the last two months.
- 1.7 Works are due to commence by the end of the financial year on the Multi-Use Games Area and Cricket practice net wickets.

Marylebone Cricket Club and Future Community Programmes

- 1.8 I recently held a meeting with officers and Guy Lavender, the recently appointed Chief Executive of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) at Lord's Cricket Ground, to discuss future plans and opportunities as MCC are hoping to host a new T20 competition from 2020 onwards. Whilst permissions and approvals of such events are beyond the scope of this portfolio, it is of interest in terms of the local community engagement opportunities beyond sport to include health and wellbeing and social cohesion.
- 1.9 The meeting was positive with MCC now considering locally-based community events that tie into the #MyWestminster Day in early July, increased local employment opportunities, and a firm commitment to continue the various outreach programmes in schools.
- 1.10 The Leader also met with Mr Lavender and was supportive of the MCC's submission to ECB high profile match panel.

The Active Queen's Park Project: Redevelopment of Moberly & Jubilee Sports Centres

- 1.11 The Active Queen's Park project is continuing to progress well and works remain on schedule. Works to deliver the new Moberly Centre are progressing well and the new £28m facility remains scheduled to be completed in Spring 2018. The existing Jubilee Centre will remain open until Moberly is opened to the public in June 2018.

Seymour Leisure Centre – Leisure Improvement Works

- 1.12 Phase 2 of the refurbishment programme has completed apart from a few small outstanding items. This includes a new spin studio, refurbished health suite, works to the main corridors and circulation areas, as well as works to both the wetside and dryside changing rooms. Feedback that we have received from users has been very positive.

Improvements works at Porchester Spa

- 1.13 Several meetings have now taken place with the Porchester Spa User Group, the local resident group, Everyone Active, and officers. Engineering consultants from boiler specialists have also attended to provide a presentation on the suggested new boiler system and answer various questions that the group had. Some further work is needed to clarify points of detail for the specification but progress is being made.

Ark Paddington Green Primary Academy

- 1.14 The public consultation has now completed for the proposed new all-weather pitch linking Ark Paddington Green Primary Academy and Little Venice Sports Centre. This will provide a state of the art 3G sand-dressed pitch that will be managed through an approved community use agreement, meaning that local young people, community clubs and groups can make use of the new pitch in the evenings and weekends.

Outdoor Learning Sayers Croft – New Apprentices

- 1.15 There are currently 7 apprentices based at Sayers Croft in Surrey and 1 at Paddington Recreation Ground in Maida Vale.

2 Libraries

Libraries Advisory Board

- 2.1 The Libraries Advisory Board, chaired by Chris Cotton, former Chief Executive of the Royal Albert Hall, held its third meeting on 29th November including a tour of libraries in Westminster. The Board is tasked with advising and supporting the Council in developing a long-term strategy for its library service, taking account of external development, Westminster's needs and priorities aligned to City for All, and in close liaison with local communities

Westminster Reference Library

- 2.2 The library is closed for refurbishment until 5th March 2018, when it will start to reopen in stages. The refurbishment includes full redecoration, restoration of wood flooring, and improvements to building utilities. Works will be completed by late May 2018. Customers are being signposted to alternative provision during the work.

Registration Services

- 2.3 The refurbishment of the wedding and ceremony suite at Old Marylebone Town Hall is almost complete. The building reopened on 11th January for industry guests - the first of a series of launch events. Over 200 invitations have been sent to photographers, wedding media, venues and supplier representatives as part of marketing the venue. There were Open House events on 13th and 14th January for over 700 potential customers, weekly open evenings will continue until March, and a celebration event on

5th February will be attended by the Lord Mayor. There is extensive publicity in the general and specialist press highlighting the reopening and the building's historic and celebrity connections. I can also confirm that, at the time of writing, over 200 couples have booked their ceremonies and the first wedding took place on 18th January.

3 Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries

Green Flag and London in Bloom awards

- 3.1 All 23 current Green Flag parks and gardens have been entered for the 2018 competition. Following improvements to the planting schemes funding by Heart of London Business Association, Leicester Square Garden has also been entered for the first time this year.

Parks and Open Spaces Investment

- 3.2 Further investment in parks and gardens has been commissioned; namely a complete refurbishment of Paddington Street Gardens play area, creation of an outdoor learning facility in St. John's Wood Church Grounds nature reserve, and additional areas of wild flower meadows in several parks to increase the biodiversity value. Additional outdoor gym equipment is also being installed at Millbank Garden and Westbourne Green open space.
- 3.3 Following the end of the large Christmas period events, full refurbishment and re-turfing commenced at Victoria Embankment Gardens during the week commencing 15th January. Leicester Square garden was re-turfed following the Lumiere event; Berkeley Square Gardens and Mount Street Gardens are also part of the Lumiere event and refurbishment works at all sites are fully funded by the event organisers.

Open Spaces and Biodiversity Strategy

- 4.4 I have now cleared the final draft of the strategy to go out to public consultation. This will be done via the Council website and Open Forum. The consultation period should begin later this month until the end of the spring. Meanwhile, we are looking at how we can develop the biodiversity agenda through a working group established with The Royal Parks and other partners.

4 Volunteering and Voluntary Sector

The Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) Support Service (provided by One Westminster)

- 4.1 A joint workshop meeting was held with One Westminster managers before Christmas, to discuss in detail the draft action plan for developing and evolving the service under the new contract. Having made refinements on the basis of that discussion, a final version of the action plan has now been formally agreed and adopted. Implementation is already underway and progress is to be monitored closely via a schedule of dedicated meetings. Dates for these (in April and June) are currently being arranged.

- 4.2 Figures from the final monitoring report demonstrated that the majority of Key Performance Indicators were met or exceeded.

Team Westminster Do-It local website (Provided by Vivo Rewards Ltd.)

- 4.3 At the time of writing, there were 302 live opportunities in Westminster. This is less than previously reported yet there are increases in all other areas where in the week prior, 46 people registered their interest, 22 opportunities and 116 organisations were added. Overall, 1,770 hours have now been logged by volunteers for opportunities in Westminster and the total amount of user signups across Team Westminster is 930.

Westminster Advice Service Partnership (WASP)

- 4.4 During the most recent quarter, the contract supported 2,528 individuals with nearly 4,000 issues, taking the Year 4 total to 15,531 individuals and 19,029 issues. Nearly 50% of the issues presented were related to benefits, with the contractor supporting residents to access £1.2m in eligible benefits. This has been a consistent pattern over the year with 50% of issues during Year 4 being related to benefits, and £5.4m in additional or new benefits being received following the provider's support. Discussions have been taking place with the provider, sector and council commissioners to shape the specification of the new contract from September 2018.

Team Westminster Flagship Volunteering (provided by Groundwork)

- 4.5 The monitoring report for Year 3 Quarter 1 (August - October 2017) is broadly reflective of progress in a 1st quarter. However, staffing changes did affect the progress of the Active strand, such as where the number of new volunteers placed in regular and one-off opportunities was 23% compared to 40% in the same quarter of the year before. A new Sports Project Coordinator has been recruited and we expect figures to pick up by the next monitoring meeting.
- 4.6 The positive impact of volunteering has been captured in case studies. For example, a 71 year old volunteer described being an ambassador as a 'life enriching experience' thanks to meeting new people, interacting with the public, and being part of a mutually supportive group of people. She described the ambassadors as a family of volunteers and would recommend it as a way to help people who may feel isolated or lonely.

Time Credits (Provided by Spice Innovations Ltd.)

- 4.7 At the time of writing, the most recent quarterly performance had not yet been reported. However, the last performance report for Year 3 Quarter 2 (July – September 2017) shows that to date the programme continues to thrive. This has been shown through:
- 114 % of target reached for hours given (total time credits earned) for the quarter;
 - Target exceeded by 35% for individuals engaging with time credits.

5 Community Engagement

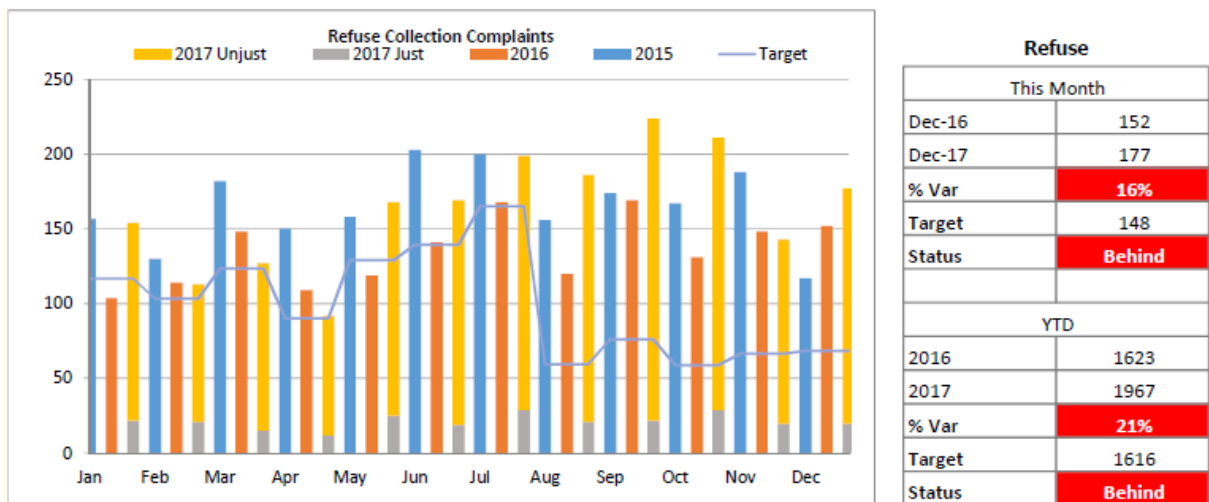
- 5.1 The most recent Open Forum event took place on 29th January at Westminster Academy from 6.30pm until 8.30pm. After receiving feedback from residents, we extended the session by 30 minutes to enable more questions to be asked.

6 Waste

Street Cleansing

- 6.1 Veolia moved from their strategic depot at New Baltic Wharf into the Council-owned depot at Mandela Way over the weekend of 4th and 5th November. Veolia were operating from their depot at New Baltic Wharf for more than 10 years.
- 6.2 The Winter Plan commenced at the start of November. In the first two months, Veolia were out gritting on a third of all nights. So far, this makes it the busiest season since the big freeze of 2010-11, although most of the mobilisations have been to protect against frost and ice in the small hours of the night, rather than for snowfall. Replenishment supplies of salt have now started to arrive at the salt store in Brent.

Waste and Recycling



- 6.3 As shown in the above graph, complaints were up in December against the same month in 2016. About 330 additional complaints were made in 2017 against the previous year. The reason for this increase in complaints is most likely due to an increased use of the Report It online tool, which makes reporting issues much easier for our customers.
- 6.5 Westminster carries out more than one million waste and recycling collections per week. The 177 complaints in December equates to 4.43 complaints per 100,000 collections made.
- 6.6 The Christmas tree recycling service was operational from Tuesday 2nd until Monday 15th January. A total of 22 sites were set up around Westminster for residents to deposit their trees, which were collected by Veolia and taken to Southwark MRF for recycling. As of

Monday 8th Jan a total of 3353 Christmas trees have been collected (32.5 tonnes), an increase of 7 per cent compared to the same stage last year.

- 6.7 Veolia deployed more than 120 people and 50 vehicles on New Year's Eve to ensure that the streets were returned to pristine condition before the New Year's Day parade. Veolia collected more than 15,000 champagne bottles and a total of 85 tonnes of waste. This year the operation started shortly after 00:30 and was completed by 04:30.

7 Environment

Greener City Action Plan (GCAP)

- 7.1 The comprehensive second year update is on the agenda and feedback and discussion is welcomed.
- 7.2 The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan was published in late 2017.
- 7.3 Work is ongoing on a new Air Quality Strategy which is due for publication by December 2018. A new Air Quality officer has been appointed who will coordinate the development, and a number of new policy ideas are being explored by officers which will be detailed in due course.
- 7.4 A second Low Emission Neighbourhood has been awarded to Northbank. Therefore, Westminster is the only borough with two active Low Emission Neighbourhoods.
- 7.5 Four schools have been selected for intensive air quality audits, funded by the Mayor but organised via the boroughs. All boroughs could apply for the funding for their worst exposure to pollution. Our selected schools are St. Clement Danes and St Mary's Bryanston, Hallfield and Gateway.

Engine Idling

- 7.6 We have continued the #DontBeldle campaign with a string of fortnightly road shows in areas of the highest pollution across the city. In total, there have been over 20 campaign events across Westminster with our team engaging with over 24,000 people through a combination of campaign events and regular patrols.
- 7.7 Our campaign messages continue to resonate with residents and have attracted several higher profile advocates including Olympians Constantine Louloudis and Ashley McKenzie. Information packs are being distributed with myth busting messages to amenity societies in order to encourage greater resident participation.
- 7.8 The campaign was shortlisted for the Best Local Authority Campaign award at the National Air Quality Awards and was identified as BBC Radio 4 PM presenter Eddie Mair's favourite story of the year in a roundup of 2017.

- 7.9 Pledge numbers continue to rise through a combination of parking renewals, social media and Air Quality Action Days. In total, nearly 6,000 people have now signed the pledge and we are on track to reach our target of 10,000 by June.
- 7.10 The Council has also recruited a new inbound marketing firm, OTM, who have been providing support to engagement with the business community. A series of letters will be distributed to businesses with the highest numbers of idling complaints in an attempt to change the behaviour of those most likely to idle.
- 7.11 From June onwards the campaign will be woven into the Council's wider aspirations around air quality, with efforts focused on encouraging other authorities to adopt #DontBeldle.

Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN)

- 7.12 Following the LEN Stakeholder meeting in December 2017 there is continued good progress on the majority the LEN's project delivery, although some aspects are proving more challenging than others, including engaging with businesses in multi-tenanted buildings, which we are learning from and adapting the approach as needed.
- 7.13 The initial results from the diesel visitor surcharge project continue to be very promising, with an overall decline of 14% in older visitor diesel vehicles parking in the area and no evidence of displacement to neighbouring parking zones. There seems to be an overall downward trend across the City towards reductions in diesels parking, and registrations for new electric vehicles in 2017 are particularly high within Westminster, suggesting residents are choosing cleaner vehicles.
- 7.14 The public realm feasibility studies are complete, and procurement is underway with 5 selected shortlisted landscape architects to design new and innovative air quality proposals for public realm improvements.
- 7.15 Engagement with businesses on deliveries and servicing by Cross River Partnership has commenced. This is led by Baker Street Quarter Partnership, with New West End Company and Marble Arch BID all promoting through communication channels.
- 7.16 Since the last report, the following events happened or are being prepared; to raise awareness about the LEN:
- Anti-Idling Action Day, 28th February 2018 – Baker Street/ Harley Street
 - Anti-Idling Action Day, 25th April 2018 – Lisson Grove
 - Anti-Idling Action Day, 25th June 2018 – Marylebone High Street