



City of Westminster

# Committee Agenda

Title: **Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date: **Monday 24th June, 2019**

Time: **7.00 pm**

Venue: **Rooms 18.01 & 18.03, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP**

Members: **Councillors:**

Timothy Barnes (Chairman)	Louise Hyams
Lorraine Dean	Andrea Mann
Richard Elcho	Guthrie McKie
Murad Gassanly	Hamza Taouzzale

**Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda**

**Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception. If you have a disability and require any special assistance please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.**



**An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Andrew Palmer, Senior Committee and Governance Officer.**

**Corporate Website: [www.westminster.gov.uk](http://www.westminster.gov.uk)**

**Note for Members:** Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions they should contact the Head of Committee and Governance Services in advance of the meeting please.

## **AGENDA**

### **PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)**

**1. MEMBERSHIP**

To note any changes to the Membership.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive declarations by Members and Officers of the existence and nature of any personal or prejudicial interests in matters on this agenda.

**3. MINUTES**

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019.

**(Pages 5 - 10)**

**4. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE - SPORTS CULTURE & COMMUNITY**

To receive an update on current and forthcoming issues within the portfolio for the Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture & Community.

**(Pages 11 - 32)**

**5. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE - CUSTOMER SERVICES AND DIGITAL**

To receive an update on current and forthcoming issues within the portfolio for the Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital

**(Pages 33 - 36)**

**6. MOBERLY SPORTS CENTRE'S FIRST YEAR**

To receive a report on the first year's use of the Moberly Sports Centre.

**(Pages 37 - 58)**

**7. LIBRARIES SERVICE - REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT LIBRARIES ADVISORY BOARD AND FUTURE STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

To receive a report and recommendations from Westminster's Libraries Service.

**(Pages 59 - 138)**

**8. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2019-20.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

To consider any other business which the Chairman considers urgent.

(Pages 139 -  
146)

**Stuart Love**  
**Chief Executive**  
**14 June 2019**

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CITY OF WESTMINSTER

## DRAFT MINUTES

### Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee

#### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee** held on **Monday 4 March 2019**, Rooms 18.01, 18.02 and 18.03, 17th Floor, City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP

**Members Present:** Councillors Tim Barnes (Chairman), Lorraine Dean, Richard Elcho, Murad Gassanly, Louise Hyams, Andrea Mann, Guthrie McKie and Hamza Taouzzale.

**Also Present:** Councillors Iain Bott, Emily Payne and Paul Swaddle.

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 Councillor Tim Barnes was nominated to be the new Chairman of the Committee and was duly appointed.
- 1.2 There were no apologies for absence. All Members were present.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 No declarations were made.

#### 3. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE - CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES & DIGITAL

- 3.1 Councillor Paul Swaddle presented a report which informed the Committee of key issues within his portfolio. Priorities included improving the customer experience with a new approach to customer services handling; establishing a Customer & Digital Standards Board; short-term improvements to Westminster's website with a view to a complete overhaul; and developing an application (app) strategy to improve the customer experience.
- 3.2 Although Westminster currently fell behind industry in its digital offer, solutions were already available. The Microsoft Dynamics platform for customer service

management was to be implemented at the end of April and would enable the City Council to join up enquiries and provide better information. The aspiration was for the City Council to become a leading local authority in providing excellent digital services.

- 3.3 The Committee also heard from Councillor Emily Payne (Deputy Cabinet Member), who would be reviewing the City Council's approach to call centres, which included CityWest Homes; and from Ezra Wallace (Head of City Policy & Strategy) and Ben Goward (Chief Information Officer).
- 3.4 The Cabinet Member considered that the existing digital systems which formed the foundation of Westminster's customer services and call-centres needed to be reviewed and improved. Councillor Swaddle had been pleased to find that staff had already been highlighting the need for a better system, but had been held back by the previous structure in which different elements of customer service were done separately without co-ordination.
- 3.5 The Digital Board would comprise of the Cabinet Member, Deputy and City Council Officers, who would seek to provide an oversight of significant Council initiatives that would impact customer experience; bring all of the customer service teams together; and promote the right standards. It was important that data could be shared between systems in different departments, to increase efficiency and improve customer experience while driving down costs and freeing resources for non-digital services.
- 3.6 The Board would encourage innovation and enable concepts and ideas to be brought into action; and would seek to design services around customers by involving them in a meaningful way and listening to their views. Committee Members highlighted the need for the views of young people to be taken into account in shaping customer services. The Board would also review the Westminster City Save Card and Library Card and consider whether the two cards could be brought together, with data being shared digitally to identify how a better experience could be provided.
- 3.7 Committee Members highlighted the role of the City Council as a people-based organisation, and expressed concern that the digital transformation was leading to a reduction in face to face contact. The Committee also agreed that a fundamental purpose of customer services was to make life easier for the most vulnerable in society. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the need to ensure that customers still had the option of face to face personal contact and confirmed that improving customer facing would be an important first step. A number of visits had been planned that would enable the views of service users to be heard.
- 3.8 Committee Members were invited to highlight any problems or opportunities in customer or digital services, and it was hoped that timelines for the review and substantive deliverables could be submitted to the Committee at its next meeting.

#### **4. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE: SPORTS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY**

- 4.1 Councillor Iain Bott presented a report which informed the Committee of current and forthcoming issues within his portfolio. Priorities included physical activity, leisure and sport; major projects and programmes; and the Outdoor Adventurous Learning Centre at Sayers Croft in Surrey which was managed by the City Council. The Cabinet Member commended the quality of the services that were being delivered to Westminster's residents, businesses and visitors; and highlighted the work of the voluntary and community sector in supporting the Abbey Community Centre and Westminster Advice Services. Councillor Bott also commented on progress in finalising the City Council's Cultural Vision; the Westminster Green Plaque Scheme; and designations for Assets of Community Value.
- 4.2 The Committee also heard from Andy Durrant (Director of Community Services), Eugene Minogue (Head of Physical Activity, Leisure & Sport) and Ezra Wallace (Head of City Policy & Strategy).
- 4.3 The Active Westminster Strategy set out the City Council's ambitions for physical activity, leisure and sport, and how the Council and its partners would work together to achieve these ambitions. Improvements to the digital service through the use of open data, an improved website and the introduction of a new ActiveWestminster Card had resulted in customers being better informed and the process for booking activities made easier.
- 4.4 The Committee discussed the use of sports facilities and open spaces in Westminster and highlighted the importance of young people remaining active. Members acknowledged the need to create a more permissive and supportive environment for physical activity, leisure and sport, and supported the removal of the restrictive 'No Ball Games' signs and Byelaws. The Cabinet Member confirmed that many of the signs had already been removed, and that Cabinet would be reviewing policy to ensure that the changes were made with caution and would not lead to noise nuisance or anti-social behaviour. The Committee commented on most of the game areas in Westminster being located in the north of the borough, and noted that this was largely due to the availability of schools and localities. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the City Council continued to look for suitable game areas across Westminster.
- 4.5 The Cabinet Member updated the Committee on the development of Westminster's Culture Strategy, which would be referred to the Committee for comment prior to publication. The Committee acknowledged that Westminster was a world destination for culture, with an excellent offer for theatres, museums and galleries. Members highlighted the aim of embedding culture into Westminster's open spaces and agreed that items which may have been archived could be displayed in a better way in places such as City Hall.

- 4.6 The Committee discussed the Green Plaque scheme and agreed that many aspects of the history of Westminster needed to be commemorated. The Cabinet Member commented that while applications such as that made for GCHQ could be worthy, others could be submitted by businesses for promotion. The scheme for Green Plaques needed to be clarified and strengthened, and the City Council had been looking at the criteria used by English Heritage as part of a review. Committee Members highlighted the need for more women to be commemorated. It was noted that the guidelines for Assets of Community Value were clear and guided by legislation, and that designation required community use.
- 4.7 Other issues discussed included dance and activity schemes for people with learning disabilities; the use of facilities at the Chelsea Barracks Sports Centre by local residents; the programme for primary schools at Paddington Recreation Ground; and progress in the refurbishment works at Lisson Green, Jubilee House and the Porchester Spa. The Cabinet Member agreed to provide an update on the Westminster Advice Service at the next meeting.

## **5. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

- 5.1 Aaron Hardy (Scrutiny Manager) invited Members to consider topics for the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20, which could have a tangible impact on the way residents accessed services. The Committee noted that a Task Group had been created to review access to culture in Westminster had now held an initial meeting, and was scheduled to report back to this Committee in September 2019.
- 5.2 The Committee highlighted the important role of libraries as information networks for cultural activities, and noted that some of the issues raised by the existing Libraries Task Group could impact on the work of the Cultural Task Group. Measures were being taken to avoid duplication, and to ensure that the work of the two Task Groups was coordinated. It was noted that although the timetable for the Libraries Task Group would not allow the Committee to make a formal contribution, there was still time for Members to feed into the report.
- 5.3 Members noted that contracts for voluntary and community services were due to be renewed in 2020, and agreed that a review of the commissioning strategy should be added to the Work Programme with representatives from the voluntary sector being invited to the Committee. The Committee also agreed to consider the development of the IT Technology Strategy which underpinned contact centres; and at how the City Council delivered services and supported internal staff. The Committee also suggested that a Task Group could be established to identify local authorities that were providing excellent digital services, and to consider how they could be brought into use in Westminster.



5.4 Other issues suggested for the work programme included a review of Westminster's call-centres; and the guidelines for Westminster's Green Plaque scheme. The Committee acknowledged the value that could be gained from involving external witnesses in scrutiny meetings; together with the importance of effectively engaging young people.

5.5 The Committee agreed that while the long-list of potential issues was being compiled, some initial areas of work should be identified for discussion at its next meeting on 24 June.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 No further business was reported.

The Meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN:\_\_\_\_\_

DATE:\_\_\_\_\_

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## Communities & Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	24 June 2019
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release / Confidential
<b>Title:</b>	Portfolio Update
<b>Report of:</b>	Cllr Iain Bott
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Councillor Iain Bott, Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	<b>Olivia Chadelle x4170</b> <a href="mailto:ochadelle@westminster.gov.uk">ochadelle@westminster.gov.uk</a>

### 1 COMMUNITY SERVICES

1.2 Within the Sport, Culture and Community portfolio, the Community Services department includes the following related areas:

- Physical Activity, Leisure & Sport (PALS)
- Major Projects and Programmes
- Outdoor Adventurous Learning Centre – Sayers Croft

### 2 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, LEISURE & SPORT (PALS)

2.1 The 2019 Westminster Mile once again became the largest mile participation event in the world, with registrations sold out at 11,500 and over 9,000 people completing the iconic mile course starting on the Mall and finishing outside Buckingham Palace. For the very first time the BBC filmed the entire event and was live streamed on BBC iPlayer, red button and Facebook channels, and is still available to view on catch up through the iPlayer. Participants and spectators were joined by numerous star names, with Mo Farah running in some of the waves before the annual Olympians wave that brings together past and present Olympic and Paralympic athletes from the British Olympic Association. The entire England and Wales Cricket World Cup squad also took part in a wave to launch the Ruth Strauss Foundation, the recently deceased wife of former England Cricket Captain, Andrew Strauss. The majority of participants took part in the

family waves, demonstrating what an inclusive event the Westminster Mile is, as well as providing the opportunity to watch the likes of Laura Muir and Chris O'Hare, where Chris ran the course in a record time of 4.00 mins exactly.

- 2.2 The Cricket World Cup trophy came to Westminster on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May. In the morning it visited Paddington Recreation Ground where an inter-schools cricket event took place involving some of Westminster's older people networks as an intergenerational approach. Once the event finished, the team packed down and transported for the afternoon 'Rainbow Stumps' event that took place on Frith Street in Soho. Working alongside Licensing and City Promotions, Events & Filming officers, the PALS team led the organisation of the event as it closely aligned to Westminster's ActiveStreets programme. The team closed the street for the afternoon to engage local businesses, residents and visitors in cricket activity. The Rainbow Stumps initiative was created to align with the work of Westminster's own LGBT network, and also worked closely with Stonewall and their own rainbow laces campaign – demonstrating the power of sport to bring all communities together for an afternoon of fun activity.
- 2.3 The 'ActiveStreets' team is formed of colleagues across CM&C working collaboratively together to create and implement a Healthier and Greener City for All. With air quality, physical activity and active travel being a key concern for our residents, it was time to take action and think outside the box to create a more permissive and supportive environment for children and families to start enjoying being outside and getting active. The team are proud to announce the successful installation of our first 'School Street' which was launched on Enford Street on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, followed by our first ever 'Play Street' on the 29<sup>th</sup> April. £14,000 external funding has also been secured via London Sport to support the development of 8 'ActiveStreet' satellite clubs (activation programmes). Both the 'School Street' and 'Play Street' involved working closely with local schools, colleagues, developers and local residents to be able to make this a success by changing many lives for the better, creating the City for All vision of 'Healthier and Greener City'.
- 2.4 Westminster Welcomes Award Winning Inclusive Sports Programme: Londoners who find it difficult to access mainstream physical activity and sporting sessions can now enjoy a variety of sports at the Moberly Sports Centre, thanks to the arrival of the award-winning 'Sport for Confidence' programme, supported and funded by Westminster City Council and the leisure management company Everyone Active. The pioneering Sport for Confidence programme places allied health professionals alongside sports coaches to deliver a wide range of sports and physical activities for those who face barriers to participation. The social enterprise is already running successful programmes at six leisure venues in Essex and one in Waltham Forest, collectively welcoming more than 1,500 participants per month. We are delighted to bring this to Moberly Sports Centre, whilst also looking to expand to the rest of the Westminster facilities.
- 2.5 The ActiveWestminster Awards, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, is an annual event held to recognise and celebrate the incredible work that partners do across the city to create an 'ActiveWestminster'. Last year, 200 people attended the event at Lords Cricket Ground, where the 10 award category winners were announced.

2.6 Neighbourhood Sports Clubs operate across Westminster and are based within community venues, leisure centres, and on estate multi-use games areas. Currently almost 130 hours of free-to-access sports activities are offered each week to the local community and are delivered by experienced coaches and clubs who are well equipped to engage our local young people. The programme offers 'doorstep sport' through the 'people like me' approach, having trained the once-participants into lead coaches and mentors.

2.7 The Champions of the Future programme supports talented young people onto their next step, through grant funding, mentoring and training. Currently 100 talented athletes from a range of sports access and benefit from the scheme, which also includes a Gifted and Talented programme in schools. Previous Champions of the Future beneficiaries have gone on to win medals at various international tournaments, and some are now ambassadors of the programme.

2.8 The following table shows the figures of the number of people visiting leisure centres across Westminster:

<b>Usage Comparison</b>	<b>2017/18 Actual</b>	<b>2018/19 Actual</b>	<b>2019/20 Actual</b>
<b>Leisure</b>			
<b>Sports and Leisure Centres- total usage</b>	<b>2,301,533</b>	<b>2,526,447</b>	<b>234,180</b>
Jubilee Sports Centre	249,075	52,613	CLOSED
Marshall Street Leisure Centre	239,873	250,077	21,912
Porchester Leisure Centre	553,045	505,829	39,805
Queen Mother Sports Centre	626,115	645,732	54,312
Seymour Leisure Centre	449,166	397,936	39,249
Little Venice Sports Centre	155,076	149,513	12,424
Moberly Sports & Education Centre	CLOSED	411,856	50,947
Swimming Lessons - all indoor sites – No. of People	29,183	112,891	15,531
<b>Outdoor Facilities- total usage</b>	<b>1,318,972</b>	<b>1,448,648</b>	<b>348,130</b>
Paddington Recreation Ground- active sports use	272,255	291,350	45,111
Paddington Recreation Ground- casual use	1,046,717	115,7298	303,019
St Augustine's Sports Centre	22,353	20,777	3,593

### **Major Projects and Programmes**

2.9 The PALS team has unveiled a brand-new adventure playground in Paddington Recreation Ground for young people of all ages and abilities. This was designed by Ruth Willmott Associates, Playscheme, and even officers from the PALS team. The project was funded from a combination of both capital resource and from a successful application to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The

playground itself features bespoke equipment that offers inclusive, creative, and stimulating play for our younger residents, including a sensory trail.

- 2.10 The new Moberly Sports Centre opened in June 2018 and since then has been performing extremely well. The annual usage target of 360,000 was surpassed within 10 months of operation by an extra almost 100,000 visits. On average, the centre has been attracting around 45,000 visits a month, over 4,500 gym members, and Westminster's largest learn-to-swim programme of over 1,045.
- 2.11 The Jubilee Phase 2 start on site, which will deliver a new Community Sports Centre, is currently being negotiated with the Council's development partner EcoWorld due to viability issues. There are currently three options that are being prepared by colleagues in GPH and to Cllr Robathan. Whilst increased security has been put in place at the Jubilee site, the team are working toward a demolition of the site as soon as possible with preparatory works being conducted.
- 2.12 The legal agreements for the Chelsea Barracks Sports Centre have now been finalised with the reserved matters agreed, demonstrating good progress has been achieved given the size and complexity of the wider programme. The sports centre is currently on track to commence on site in 2023, with delivery in 2026. The sports centre will be subterranean in build and consists of a four-court sports hall, 25M pool, learner pool, two studios and a large health and fitness gym.
- 2.13 Seymour Leisure Centre/New Marylebone Library: Since meeting with Cabinet Members in March, officers have considered their advice and questions against the proposals and feasibility report, which has led to a number of positive actions. One of these key actions was engaging further with Sport England, who have agreed to fund a small project team to review the current plans, give overall cost advice and, as part of a second stage, work alongside council officers to develop a more detailed business case for the remodelling of Seymour Leisure Centre to incorporate a bigger library with its own entrance on Bryanston Place. Sport England are, like us, very keen to support 'co-located' services, such as bringing Leisure and Libraries together, and the prospect of capital investment for the project is already positive. Historic England has also visited the facility and the current proposals have been shared. The general view is positive, however more detailed conversations are ongoing about the change in space of the main hall to accommodate the new pool and raising the sports hall to a 1<sup>st</sup> floor mezzanine. The next and most vital stage that officers are taking forward is the production of a more detailed business case that will be presented in the next couple of months. Governance arrangements and the required resourcing for this work is being established and discussions concerning potential sources of funding is taking place over the coming weeks.
- 2.14 Queen Mother Sports Centre Redevelopment: Officers have been working with GPH colleagues to provide information relating to feasibility work, which is being carried out for Cllr Robathan. Revised Sports Centre plans have recently been shared with the Community Services Team, and comments are being collated and returned to GPH. The new scheme looks to incorporate a 2 x 25m aligned

pool (Central London's first flexible 50m pool) as well as meet the outline Employer's Requirements. The main 25m pool will be retained during the construction period, avoiding the need for a temporary pool, which previously was a challenge for the project team.

- 2.15 Paddington Recreation Ground: There is a package of works to carry out improvements at Paddington Recreation Ground using a combination of Capital budget and CIL funding worth circa £1.5million over the next 3 years. This work includes delivery of a new community suite, three new sports pitches, a callisthenics area, parkour equipment, a sprint track, and new efficient LED lighting as well as landscaping and completing works to the wildlife and forest garden area. These works are being coordinated by Ruth Willmott Associates and MSc Consultants. As part of this wider project there is a review of the Paddington Recreation Ground Management Plan being undertaken to work alongside the various policies applicable to the park and coordinate them with the works that will be undertaken making them relevant and accountable to the team and the contractors that operate in it.

### **Outdoor Adventurous Learning Centre – Sayers Croft**

- 2.16 Sayers Croft is Westminster's flagship outdoor learning centre based in Surrey. The centre has 56 acres where children and young people can explore a wider choice of activities from pond dipping to climbing and DofE courses. Westminster schools benefit from priority access and charges where they can stay in one of the six chalets that provides over 200 beds. This year, residential visits are expected to reach 35,000.
- 2.17 Working in partnership with Everyone Active and the PALS team, extensive refurbishment work has taken place across Paddington Recreation Ground to improve the environmental area and classroom for Sayers Croft to provide Forest Schools. Each year, around 6,000 children benefit from the Forest Schools programme, which increases physical activity in the great outdoors. Last October the team were delighted to receive a special visit from the Duchess of Cambridge who has an interest in outdoor activity.
- 2.18 A further visit was made in the last couple of months by the Duchess of Cambridge. This was part of a 'closed doors' visit involving the BBC and Blue Peter, with a film to be shown on the programme later this year. The most impressive part of this was that the Duchess herself recommended returning to PRG as she was so impressed with what had been seen last year.

### **Strictly Westminster**

- 2.19 Strictly Westminster is a 6-7 week disability dancing programme that we are looking to provide for the community starting in September 2019 and finishing with a Gala Final in November. It is also hoped that the winners will showcase their performance at the annual Christmas Tea Dance in early December.

2.20 Three half-day workshops will take place which will then be followed in the afternoon by auditions to participate in the Gala Final. Across the three workshop / audition days, the aim is to identify the 10 most promising dancers who will then be supported by 6 weeks of training to help them get ready for the Gala Final. It is hoped that 100 participants in total will attend from across the North, Central and South networks of the borough.

### **No Ball Games**

2.21 It is important that residents are not restricted in being able to take part in physical activity near their homes, and this includes play. Therefore, current restrictive signage and byelaws such as 'No Ball Games' and 'No Cycling' will be removed to create a more permissive and supportive environment for physical activity, leisure and sport.

2.22 In order to implement this, the PALS Team (alongside Parks) are leading a review of the Byelaws and working up proposed new Byelaws to reflect our new ActiveWestminster Strategy, Biodiversity and Open Spaces strategy with input from Public Health.

## **3 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS)**

3.1 Abbey Community Centre Service Level Agreement (SLA): A new SLA has been finalised, agreed and signed off by all parties. This outlines arrangements for the grant made to the Abbey Community Association which funds their rent and activities at the Abbey Centre (34 Great Smith St, London SW1P 3BU). The centre, both independently and in some cases jointly with the Council, delivers a wide range of services which contribute to the health, wellbeing and level of engagement of the community in the south of the city. Many of their services support the vulnerable and bring people together in a way that supports community cohesion, tackles isolation and improves individual and collective wellbeing. The new SLA is in place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and will support outcome-focused service delivery and facilitate meaningful evaluation of impact over time.

3.2 Westminster Advice Services (WASP contract): A full procurement exercise for the Westminster Advice Services contract was completed in September 2018. The contract was awarded to a consortium led by Citizens Advice Westminster. The service provides advice services for Westminster residents, ranging from general advice, for example to help people navigate council services, through to tailored advice and casework for complex multiple needs. Services are free of charge to people living in Westminster, including temporary residents. The new contract incorporates some additional areas of service previously commissioned separately: 'Advice Plus' funded by Public Health, Licensing Advice and debt advice for CityWest Homes residents. The second round of performance monitoring for the new contract has been carried out the contract is on track.



- 3.3 Volunteering Contracts: Officers are continuing to review existing provision with a view to developing our strategic and commissioning approach for contracts due to expire in 2020. Those existing contracts are: Team Westminster Flagship Volunteering, Team Westminster Outreach & Development Service, Westminster Time Credits provided by Tempo Ltd.
- 3.4 Community Awards 2019: The Community Awards, in partnership with One Westminster and Groundwork, are the Council's annual ceremony to recognise volunteers in Westminster. After successfully running for some years, a refresh of the concept, audience and communications approach and budgets is being adopted. There are new categories all aligned to the City for All vision, aimed at widening the reach of engagement amongst residents. The awards have been renamed as the #MyWestminster Community Awards. Nominations closed on 7<sup>th</sup> of June, with the awards planned for the 9<sup>th</sup> of July in City Hall.

## 4 CULTURE

- 4.1 With the support of the new Cabinet Member for Sport, Culture and Community, further changes are planned to transform the current draft Cultural Vision (resulting from an internal council audit) into a Cultural Strategy to align it with the Council's City for All vision and to strengthen its relevance among external stakeholders including residents. The strategy will clearly demonstrate its delivery of overarching City for All vision aims:
- **'Caring and fairer city'**: with a focus on access to culture for more Westminster residents, particularly the hard-to-reach
  - **'City of opportunity'**: Subject to development, the City Lions programme will provide more cultural access opportunities for young people
  - **'City that celebrates its communities'**: Creative placemaking objectives will be closely aligned with this ambition
  - **'Healthier and greener city'**: Social prescribing and mental health initiatives such as 'Westminster Sings' will support public health outcomes

The Cultural Strategy will incorporate an action plan for the period 2020-2024. Detail will be included on how Westminster's Cultural Strategy aligns with DCMS, Arts Council and GLA cultural policies to demonstrate its wider relevance. A roundtable, open forum and other stakeholder meetings during a pre-consultation phase will test the emerging priorities and develop actions in the Cultural Strategy. The formal consultation process will enable the draft Cultural Strategy to be published online and promoted widely among residents, internal and external stakeholders whose feedback will inform the final publication. This consultation period will be October- November 2019 towards a publication date of January 2020.

- 4.2 The Cultural Policy Officer is working closely with the Business Team on developing a roundtable event on 19<sup>th</sup> June to find practical ways to make apprenticeships more user-friendly and valuable for local creative and cultural businesses. A recent Council Creativity Skills seminar identified particular needs to ensure that apprenticeships are tailored to existing and future technical and digital skills needs and that access issues are addressed.

Creative & Cultural Skills are partnering on this event and they have resources, as a delivery partner of the DCMS Creative Careers programme, that can support the outcomes of this initiative.

- 4.3 To promote arts engagement and accreditation for local schoolchildren, the Council is hosting an Arts Award event on 10<sup>th</sup> July in the Lord Mayor’s Parlour that is supported by A New Direction (the bridge organisation for London) in collaboration with Islington, Camden, Haringey and Kensington & Chelsea councils, that will be attended by local schoolteachers and arts organisations.
- 4.4 A world-leading expert on Banksy conservation, Chris Bull of Fine Art Restoration Company, is to build a hi-spec cabinet to conserve the new art work intervention next to Marble Arch that appeared during the Extinction Rebellion protest. The conservation report uncovered strong links with other Banksy works that had used similar stencils or were linked to performances by pop band, Massive Attack. In addition, the conservationist is providing pro-bono advice on options regarding the Council’s Fitzrovia Banksy which is in a poor condition and has been re-located from its original site.
- 4.5 The following Green Plaque nominations are in progress:

Submission	Organisation	Notes	Status
<b>Informal approval in place</b>			
Westminster Hospital Westminster Green, 8 Dean Ryle Street, London SW1P 4DA	CW+, the charity of the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	The nomination commemorates the 300-year anniversary of Westminster Hospital in 2019, which was located on this site from 1939 to 1992.  Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust was formed from Westminster Hospital.	Informal approval in place. Cabinet report underway.

Middlesex Hospital Medical School	Douglas Irish & Prof Gavin Vinson The Society of Endocrinology	It was at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School that James Tait, Sylvia Simpson and Hilary Grundy made the epochal discovery of the hormone aldosterone. This hormone is secreted by the adrenal gland, and among all the hormones it shares only with insulin the distinction of being essential for life.	Informal approval in place. Cabinet report underway.
Sir Alan Dawtry Pimlico station underpass	Sir Rodney Brooke	Former Chief Executive of Westminster City Council and instrumental in bringing a tube station to Pimlico.	Informal approval in place. Cabinet report underway.
Gramophone Recording Company 31 Maiden Lane, Covent Garden	James Hall, journalist	In 1898 the UK's first gramophone recording studio was opened in the basement of 31 Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, by The Gramophone Company.	Informal approval in place. Cabinet report underway.
Nipper Pat Daly 19 and 24 Hatton Street, NW8	Alexander Daley, grandson	Nipper Pat Daly was Marylebone's most successful professional boxer and arguably boxing's greatest ever prodigy - known as 'Marylebone's Wonderboy'.	Informal approval in place. Cabinet report underway.
Lady Jane shop, Carnaby Street	Danny Ben-Moshe, son of co-founder Henry Moss who is still alive	First ladies fashion shop on Carnaby Street, known for the 'live mannequins' stunt.	Informal approval in place. Cabinet report underway.

Cabinet reports submitted			
William Whiteley 2 Kildare Terrace, W2	Kildare Terrace and Newton Road Residents Association	William Whiteley 1831-1907 Founder of London's first department store lived here 1868-1885	Cabinet report submitted
Live nominations			
Headquarters of the Australian Imperial Force, 1914-18  95 Horseferry Road, SW1P 2DX	Caroline Macnaughton, London Scottish Regimental Trust <a href="mailto:comptroller@londonscottishregt.org">comptroller@londonscottishregt.org</a>	The building stands on the site of a group of buildings that formed the headquarters of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), 1914-1918. A Green Plaque nomination has been submitted for the centenary year of the end of the First World War.	Awaiting further information from sponsor.
John Dryden, 44 Gerrard Street	Nicola Avery-Gee Central Medway Investments Limited, building owners	John Dryden (1631- 1700) England's first poet laureate Lived in a house on this site from 1687-1700	Royal Society of Arts plaque in incorrect location at 43 Gerrard Street – passed back to nominator to pursue and advised that we cannot place two plaques on one building. Hold until resolved.
Dr James Risien Russell, 44 Wimpole Street	Helen Burgess	Dr. James Samuel Risien Russell, thought to be the first black Consultant in the UK and esteemed neurologist had his private practice and residence here and died at work at his desk in 1939.	On hold - Windrush Foundation has advised that a Blue Plaque nomination is currently underway.

Dr James Miranda Barry 14 Margaret Street, W1	Simon Shaw, independent	Dr James Miranda Barry, Britain's first woman doctor, died here July 1865	No funding or building permission in place.
Julian and Leo Amery, 112 Eaton Square	Baroness Rawlings	Julian and Leo Amery owned 112 Eaton Square for over half a century and held most amazing meetings and historical events. A biography has recently been written by Richard Bassett on Julian.	Buildings owners Grosvenor have refused permission  Previously refused by English Heritage.
Halima Nalecz, 5-7 Porchester Place, London W2 2BS	Joanna Love, The Church Commissioners for England	This was the gallery, studio of the artist for over three decades. Halima Nalecz 1914 to 2008 Artist, Patron and Gallery owner. Founded the Drian Gallery on this site in 1957. She promoted the careers of fledging artists from the British abstract expressionists and donated 565 works to Polish national museums	Further research required.

4.6 Current City of Sculpture proposals are listed below.

Location	Sculpture	Artist & gallery	Status	Timeframe
Planning permission approved				
Park Lane, Island 6 opposite The Hilton	Crawling	Sophie Ryder, Hignell Gallery	Planning permission granted. Awaiting confirmation of removal date of current sculpture, One Million Queen before installation and licenses can be	As soon as current sculpture is removed

			booked. Planning enforcement are involved.	
Golden Square	Bra and Corset	Kalliopi Lemos, Gazelli Art House	Planning permission granted	Requested that installation takes place after Pride (7 July onwards)
Cavendish Square Gardens	Visitor	David Breuer-Weil	Planning permission extended	Immediate
Berkeley Square Gardens	Butterflies	Manolo Valdes, Opera Gallery	Planning permission extended to Oct 2019	Immediate
Planning applications submitted				
Marble Arch	Orphans	Gillie and Marc, independent	Planning application submitted	Dec 2019 installation
Golden Square	Hello Sunshine	Graham McLoughlin, independent	Planning application submitted and corporate sponsorship being sought by artist	Late July/early August
Soho Square	Baba Yaga	Irina Lagoshina, Tim Jurjevs	Planning application submitted	Summer 2019
Withdrawn or removed				
Park Lane, Dorchester	Charging Bull or Il Cavallo	Arturo Di Modica, Geist Holdings	Withdrawn due to ill health of artist	N/A
Cavendish Square Gardens	Ba Le Panda and Doggy John	Julien Marinetti, Galerie Londres	Withdrawn	N/A
Berkeley Square Gardens	Bronze Oak Grove	Rob and Nic Carter, independent	Removed	May 2019

Expressions of interest				
Soho Square	Unknown	Pieter Obels, Porcini Gallery	Looking to replace current Obels sculpture with a new installation	TBC
Berkeley Square or Mount Street Gardens	Staircase	Rachel Whiteread, Gagosian Gallery	Cabinet Member briefing to be submitted	March 2020

## 5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

5.1 Open Forum took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> May where 62 people attended. The details of the next meeting will be available in due course.

## 6 CITY LIONS

6.1 City Lions is a two-year pilot programme which commenced in Summer 2018. It targets disadvantaged young people aged 13-16. It aims to enrich young people's lives by encouraging participation in cultural and creative opportunities. City Lions is helping young people discover and celebrate their own culture and creativity and make the best of what Westminster has to offer.

6.2 As well as broadening young people's horizons by offering workshops, one-off events and exclusive offers, City Lions aims to use Westminster City Council's influence to provide unique opportunities for those most in need in the City.

6.3 City Lions also endeavours to raise awareness of the career opportunities that lie within these industries, by exposing young people to the wider cultural and creative sectors via work placements, shadowing opportunities and talks with industry professionals.

6.4 The programme objectives are:

- engage 345 young people per year;
- provide 30 unique work experience opportunities per year;
- provide 10 creativity workshops in association with Westminster schools, youth clubs, children's services and youth organisations;

6.5 City Lions is nearing the end of the first year of the programme. It has engaged 313 young people to date. 174 Westminster students have taken part in creativity workshops, which have included at least one visit to a cultural organisation such as the Saatchi Gallery, the Photographer's Gallery or Somerset House. Of the participants that were identified as Westminster residents, 52% of young people originated from the top 30% most deprived

wards in the borough. Two additional workshops to coincide with the summer holidays have also been planned.

- 6.6 An additional 139 young people have participated in at least one, standalone activity sourced by City Lions. These include film premieres, tickets to exclusive events and ice skating at Somerset House.
- 6.7 City Lions has successfully brokered 29 exciting work experience placements, which have been put out to various Westminster schools and the Looked After Children's team for allocation. Providers include Child Graddon Lewis Architects, Everyone Active and Balfour Beatty.
- 6.8 City Lions has also been working in partnership with several external organisations to create unique events, including: Creative Industries Week: 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July; AEG British Summer Time: 5<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> July; Youth Takeover Day: 10<sup>th</sup> July; Society of London Theatre (SOLT) Inspiring Future Theatre Day: Bring Back Stage; On Stage: 3<sup>rd</sup> July; and Multiplex Construction Learning Initiative: 21<sup>st</sup> May onwards.

## **7 LIBRARIES**

### **Overview of Libraries, Archives and Registration Services**

- 7.1 There are 13 libraries including two specialist libraries in the City of Westminster, providing a wide range of services for people who live, work or study in the borough. Our purpose is to enable them to read, learn and connect with one another. All our libraries have free Wi-Fi. Nearly two million people visit the libraries annually, borrowing over 1.2 million items including eBooks, eMagazines, eNews and eAudio. Libraries hold over 9,500 events, including 3,300 children's events.
- 7.2 The City of Westminster Archives Centre was granted Accredited Status by the National Archives in July 2016, the first London borough to be granted this status.

### **Priorities for the Libraries and Archives Service, 2019/20**

- 7.3 Priorities in the Libraries and Archives 2018/19 business plan included improving the libraries' working culture and a renewed focus on promoting reading as part of the service's purpose to help people to read, learn, and connect. It is intended that the foundations of a motivated and purposeful team will enable the delivery of the service operating model and future strategy.
- 7.4 A new business planning approach for the service has been implemented for 2019/20, which harnesses the knowledge of staff from across the service which was shared with key stakeholders for comment. The plan is linked to the Council's medium-term financial strategy and the business planning process in the wider City Management and Communities directorate, of which libraries and archives are part.



- 7.5 The library service is delivered through a shared arrangement with Hammersmith and Fulham, and Kensington and Chelsea. The Council remains committed to keeping its libraries open and accessible to all.
- 7.6 In December 2018, Hammersmith and Fulham Council signalled it wanted to end the agreement for a shared TriBorough library service after six years of working together. Westminster City Council, together with Kensington and Chelsea, will form a BiBorough library and archive service in place of the current arrangements. The aim will be for a seamless transition to new arrangements, with any impacts on library service users minimised.
- 7.7 Key challenges and risks include:
- changes in customer demand resulting in requirements for new digital services to be provided alongside existing print and analogue formats, which may increase costs although there are also opportunities for more efficient provision;
  - increasingly diverse use of library spaces, and potential for conflict between differing needs and uses;
  - cost of maintaining busy public buildings such as libraries to an appropriate standard;
  - declining income from traditional sources such as charges for overdue books and loan of CDs, and the need to develop new sources of funding that are complementary to residents' expectations of what libraries are for.

### **Marylebone Library**

- 7.8 A new library for Marylebone will be provided at the Seymour Centre and work to plan and design it, alongside improvements to the sport and leisure facilities, is underway. Co-location with sports and leisure will enable libraries and leisure to work together, promoting well-being and physical and mental health, and encouraging people to take part in activities. The new library will provide a modern, sustainable and relevant service for the whole community with a great choice of books, up to the minute IT facilities and a comprehensive programme of events.

### **Libraries Advisory Board**

- 7.9 The Council established an advisory board in 2017 to advise it on the long-term future for libraries in Westminster and to assist in the formulation of a long-term strategy. The Board is chaired by Chris Cotton DL, former CEO of the Royal Albert Hall, who was tasked with advising and supporting the Council in developing a long-term strategy for its library service, taking account of external development and Westminster's needs and priorities aligned to City for All.

- 7.10 Historic England has also been shown around the facility and the current proposals shared. The general view is positive, however more detailed conversations are on-going about the change in space of the main hall to accommodate the new pool and raised sports hall to a mezzanine floor structure.
- 7.11 The next and most vital stage that officers are taking forward is the production of a more detailed business case that will be presented in the next couple of months. Governance arrangements and the required resourcing for this work are being established and discussions concerning potential sources of funding is taking place over the coming weeks.

### **Westminster Reference Library**

- 7.12 Westminster Reference Library, with support from the Westminster economy team, is starting a three-month trial period in June offering an affordable workspace for creative businesses such as art, fashion, design film and media start-ups at a cost of £200 per month for six fixed desk workspaces on the mezzanine level of the ground floor library area.

### **Improved Digital**

- 7.13 Public Wi-Fi in all libraries have been improved. In December 2018, a BlueCloud Mobile library app was launched giving customers the choice of more digital resources which has seen an increase in downloads of eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines and eNewspapers by 259 per cent.

## **8 REGISTRATION SERVICE**

- 8.1 Westminster has the highest number of approved venues for marriage and civil partnership in London with over 150 venues - three times more than the second highest in London, and the third highest in England and Wales.
- 8.2 The General Register Office of England and Wales (part of the Home Office) carries out assurance reviews of local authority registration services every two years. This involves an examination of the security arrangements for the security of official forms used in the registration of births, marriages and deaths and data storage arrangements and security of records and information. A review in July 2018 concluded that the City of Westminster Registration Service provides “high” assurance, an improvement on the “satisfactory” level achieved in 2016.
- 8.3 The Registration Service is working with libraries to introduce the EU Settlement Scheme at Victoria library, where customers without an Android device can upload documents and data in support of their application to be recognised as a settled EU Citizen in the UK. This will be offered free of charge to Westminster residents, with non-residents paying £21. At the time of writing, this was expected to start at the end of May 2019.

- 8.4 The Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration Etc.) Act, which received Royal Assent on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019, contains provisions for regulations to be made to extend eligibility for forming a civil partnership to opposite sex couples. The exact implementation date is not yet confirmed but the regulations must be in force by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. The Westminster Registration Service has already received enquiries from interested couples and is ready to facilitate bookings.

## **9 WESTMINSTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE (WAES)**

### **Introduction and Strategic Review**

- 9.1 WAES is the City Council's Adult Education Service, delivering learning and training programmes to around 8500 learners annually. Operating through a delegated scheme of management, the Service has a Board of Governors. It is grant funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and receives no funding from the City Council.
- 9.2 A strategic review of the service is currently underway. An external consultant has been engaged to provide some independence and additional scrutiny. The purpose of the review is to help the City Council and specifically the Westminster Adult Education Service to:
- Give WAES prominence on its work and impact/outcomes achieved to date;
  - Continue to improve the quality and effectiveness of adult education and training strategy and provision, playing a key role in meeting the economic and educational needs of the area, increasing learner participation, raising achievement and supporting progression;
  - Acquire a better understanding of how WAES can best position itself both in terms of impacts and opportunities in relation to the future of adult skills and successfully deliver on its new Strategic Plan for the period 2019-22.
  - Identify the future needs of the service including WAES accommodation requirements in line with strategic direction and planning;
  - Assess the current contribution WAES makes to fulfilling the wider City for All Vision and identify its potential to deliver increased impact through informing, shaping and supporting the delivery of the City Skills Framework and Economic Opportunity Strategy in relation to adult skills.
  - Assess the effectiveness of links with other City Council services/departments, the wider Adult Skills provider community, other strategic and commercial partners in order to derive maximum benefit to adult learners in Westminster and the local community.
- 9.3 The Head of Business and Enterprise (Economy Team in the Growth Planning and Housing Directorate) is the Council's lead officer for the strategic review, which will conclude at the end of July. The strategic review

report is scheduled to be presented at the Economic Development, Education and Place Shaping Policy and Scrutiny Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

### **Skills Training for Employment**

- 9.4 WAES 2 Employment is a suite of employment focused training programmes that the adult education service delivers with key partners to actively support and progress learners into employment. To date we have run three distinct programmes:
- **Construction and Customer Service:** This is delivered in partnership with Access Employment and Education Training (AEET), Westminster Employment Service (WES) and Central London Forward (CLF): This project is aimed at London residents with an emphasis on CLF residents. Learners are provided with training in Employability Skills, Health and Safety and CSCS (in the case of construction learners). The learners are then supported by job coaches into work. To date, 188 learners have completed and 46 have progressed to employment.
  - **Construction traineeship in partnership:** This is delivered with Geason Training, Morgan Sindall and City of Westminster Housing Service. WAES is supporting the CityFutures programme in which residents gain construction training and work experience with progression into either an apprenticeship or employment.
  - **Personal Fitness programme in partnership with Moberly Sports Centre:** This programme allows learners and residents to gain a qualification at level 3 and take advantage of the wonderful facilities at Moberly Sport Centre. Once qualified, participants can become personal trainers in both the employed and self-employed sectors. We currently have 20 learners on this programme, which is due to finish in July.
- 9.5 WAES Traineeships support young residents towards employment. WAES hosted a Traineeship Open Day and Work-Ready Event on the 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at the WAES Lisson Grove site to provide an insight into our Traineeship and Employability programmes for 2019. The event raised participant awareness of the challenges of professional standards in the workplace. Participants were able to hear from the employers about the work and development opportunities available. WAES has established a regular base on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Job Centre in Marylebone. This space is used to exhibit our offer and enables our staff to give advice on training, traineeships and future study options that can lead to careers and improved employment prospects for benefit claimants.

### **Growth Funding Opportunities**

- 9.6 A key driver for the WAES 2019-22 Strategy is to grow the business by seeking and securing additional sources of funding, which will enable us to expand our activities with Westminster and other London residents. Over the last three

months, we have submitted bids for four funding opportunities to support a range of activities. These include:

- Returners Fund: The Government Equalities Office is seeking to fund programmes to help get carers who have been out of work for more than 12 months back into work. WAES has bid for £80K to support parents into work in the hospitality sector. This will be targeted at Westminster residents but not limited to them.
- Erasmus: European Union funding has allowed for member countries to bid for funding to support improvement in current practices. WAES has bid for €225K to support the exchange of Good Practice in the use of technology to support teaching learning and assessment methods. This will be a collaboration with adult education partners in Italy, Poland and Spain.
- The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) Adult Learning: RBKC has published a tender to deliver its adult education budget. WAES has submitted a bid for £200K to deliver to RBKC residents and WAES currently delivers to over 300 RBKC residents.
- The Greater London Authority (GLA): In May, the GLA published a call for proposals for a six-year funding opportunity to support lifelong learning and facilitate the transition from education to work. WAES is part of a joint bid, which has a value of £1.3M.

9.7 National recognition of achievement: The Festival of Learning is the biggest celebration of lifelong learning in England. It highlights the benefits of learning, celebrates the achievements of adults who have used learning to transform their lives and encourages everyone to embrace lifelong learning. The awards have high recognition within the further and adult education sector. WAES entered two staff and three learners for the awards. The learners received an award for outstanding achievement and a staff member received a certificate in recognition of high standards in teaching and learning. The certificates will be presented to the learners at the WAES Annual Learner Awards on 10<sup>th</sup> July at Regent's University and the staff member will receive their award at the WAES Staff Conference on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019.

### **WAES Events**

9.8 Open Events: We have held three open events; one on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at Lisson Grove Centre, another on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at Amberley Centre, and one on 15<sup>th</sup> May at the Pimlico Centre. The events focused on offering 'have-a-go' sessions in floristry, visual art, ceramics and fashion. ESOL learners were assessed and enrolled and advice and guidance was offered by our learner experience team. Our open evenings offer an opportunity for the public to meet our team, ask questions, visit the classrooms and enrol on a programme of their choice. We also offer advice on financing.

## **Health and Wellbeing Events**

- 9.9 On 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at Holy Apostles' Hall, Pimlico, WAES staff showcased our curriculum offer and opportunities for local residents at the Community Champions Health Fair.
- 9.10 In April, staff attended the Spring Health Fair and Employment Zone in Pimlico. It offered an opportunity to promote our provision within the local community. The event proved very popular and gave WAES a great opportunity to engage with local residents on our curriculum offer and showed how residents can engage with WAES.
- 9.11 On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019, members of WAES' Service Management team participated in the Westminster City Council event on Mental Health by contributing to a presentation regarding Mental Health and Wellbeing impact at WAES. This included presenting the curriculum offer we have in the field, support services for staff and learners.

## **Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

- 9.12 On 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019, we delivered a new event called International Mother Language Day. The Family Learning team offered a number of activities for children and parents. This attracted high levels of attendance from learners, families and staff. The interactive activities were a great opportunity for social integration and celebrating the diversity of the WAES learners and staff.
- 9.13 WAES celebrated International Women's Day by highlighting the achievements of women all over the world. There was a display in reception and canteen and a cake sale that benefited a local women's charity, The Marylebone Project.
- 9.14 At the Lisson Grove site, as part of the celebration of International Women's Day, the ceramics team and learners offered a wide range of high quality ceramics for sale. The profits of the sale were donated to charities that were chosen by our learners.
- 9.15 In April, WAES learners with learning difficulties and disabilities created a great day that captured the spirit of business enterprise with a very successful confectionary sale and donation box to raise money for Great Ormond Street. This event displayed the learners at their best and work-ready skills were at the forefront of the activity. This was a showcase of how learners with disabilities and difficult-to-overcome barriers are determined to prepare for employment and future steps towards independence.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the  
Background Papers please contact Olivia Chadelle x4170  
[ochadelle@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:ochadelle@westminster.gov.uk)**

## **APPENDICES:**

For any supplementary documentation; especially from external stakeholders or documents which do not fit this template.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

This section is for any background papers used to formulate the report or referred to in the body of the report.

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## Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	24 June 2019
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	Cabinet Member Update
<b>Report of:</b>	Councillor Paul Swaddle, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Customer Services and Digital
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	City for All
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	Julia Corkey and Gerald Almeroth Ext. 3411

### 1. Cabinet Member Priorities

- 1.1 As mentioned in my previous report to this Committee, this new portfolio was established in January 2019 to oversee the Council's customer services and digital transformation programmes. The portfolio also includes responsibility for the Council's information and technology services, and broadband connectivity, working in partnership with the Gig Economy and Broadband Champion. Deputy Cabinet Member, Councillor Emily Payne, has been tasked with the important remit of reviewing our approach to call centres. I am pleased to see that the Committee will look at call centres as part of its workplan for the year.
- 1.2 In continuing to deliver the Leader's vision for a City for All, I want to provide the best customer experience for our residents, making it as easy as possible to access local services. As a Council we will take responsibility for dealing with problems in full the first time and working with people and families to prevent more complex issues developing.

1.3 My goal for the Customer Services and Digital portfolio is for the Council to be the leader in local Government for customer satisfaction and ease of engagement. As part of this vision, I strive to make digital the customers' channel of choice through automating back office integration and workflows as well as working to drive down costs for the Council.

1.4 My key priorities are:

- Improving the customer experience with a new approach to customer services handling;
- The establishment of a **Customer and Digital Standards Board** – to provide member and officer oversight of significant Council initiatives which will impact customer experience, which includes a high-level overview of wider Council customer and digital projects;
- **Short-term improvements to the Council's website ([www.westminster.gov.uk](http://www.westminster.gov.uk))** – to redesign the look of the website to give it a modern, more engaging look, as well as making some improvements to usability and accessibility with a view for a complete overhaul; and
- **Developing an application (app) strategy** - to improve the customer experience and the Council's digital offer.

1.5 To this end, this report provides an overview of the progress against my priorities since my last update to the Committee in March.

## 2. Customer and Digital Standards Board

2.1 As the Committee will know, I established this board to provide oversight of the Council's digital initiatives and governance to ensure all our digital services adhere to high level standards, in line with wider industry and government guidelines.

2.2 I am pleased to report that the board has made a good start. We have already reviewed several projects in their early infancy and advised on some more advanced projects to ensure they are executed to the high quality our customers expect. There is now a full pipeline of digital initiatives for the board to consider and the board is meeting on a fortnightly basis to manage this.

2.3 I look forward to keeping the Committee updated on the board's progress as it becomes more established.

## 3. Improving Customer Experience

3.1 The Council has completed a number of digital projects which intend to improve the customer experience with a new approach to customer services handling. I have provided highlights below:

### **Customer Contact Centre**

- 3.2 Dynamics 365 interface has now been implemented to the Agilisys customer contact centre to replace the previous Lagan system. It went live in April for the out of hours service. The solution was successfully deployed and Lagan has now been decommissioned. We have been monitoring the new system closely to ensure it is well bedded in.

### **FamilyStory Pilot**

- 3.3 FamilyStory is a web tool to trial new ways of working for social workers to record meeting notes and visits which allows visit notes to be shared with families.
- 3.4 The solution went live successfully in April and is in its infancy. The team is currently adding more social workers to increase users.
- 3.5 The next stage is for pilot users to meet to feedback and improve use of the system. The pilot itself will end at the end of June 2019.

### **Noise SMS**

- 3.6 The Council's noise SMS text service successfully went live in May. This solution provides customers with the ability to update noise complaints via SMS text messaging, and it is expected will reduce the number of visits required to cases.
- 3.7 The service also enables a speedier customer response and ability for officers to attend, and more effectively investigate, the most serious and complex cases.
- 3.8 Initial figures for the first 10 days show that the total number of cases that were closed automatically without officer intervention was 45%. We consider these figures to be an indicator of what might be possible on a long-term basis, and we are closely monitoring the system.

### **Report It replacement**

- 3.9 The Council is replacing the Westminster City Council website's current Report It forms with FixMyStreet.
- 3.10 With feedback being received on the website's Report It solution, a procurement process identified mySociety's FixMyStreet as a proven capability to replace this existing solution and provide an improved user experience, including a mobile app.
- 3.11 We are taking the opportunity to replace the existing MyWCC registration process with a new solution which will allow login via social media accounts and over time provide the ability to introduce tiered levels of authentication based on user need. An initial basic proof of concept is being developed and prepared for base testing against FixMyStreet in the Summer.

- 3.12 The project team are also working with the services to review existing forms to identify where these can be streamlined to make it easier for a customer to report an issue without compromising the service's need to fulfil any request.
- 3.13 FixMyStreet will be deployed in phases over the Summer, incorporating a wider set of report types that is currently available via MyWCC. A soft launch of the first phase is expected in late Summer.

#### **4. Westminster City Council's Website**

- 4.1 Following user feedback in 2018, we are refreshing the Council website to make interim improvements ahead of a planned major website overhaul.
- 4.2 This site redesign project is well underway. On Thursday 13 June, we released phase one of our website refresh. This included an updated homepage, a refresh of the site header and footer, and improvements to accessing key services (e.g. Report It, Apply and Pay, Licensing and Planning). At the time of this report, there had been no reported issues, but we are continuing to monitor the situation.
- 4.3 Later releases are being mapped-out for the incremental go-live of improved search function, news and campaigns pages and key services areas. A number of user journey efficiencies and accessibility improvements are also planned.
- 4.4 This project offers us the opportunity to significantly improve the user experience and modernise the website in the short term. It takes an ambitious yet pragmatic approach, achieving high impact while balancing the need to be sensitive to resource expenditure while we prepare for the future site overhaul.
- 4.5 Longer-term plans to overhaul the website are at scoping phase. We are ambitious in our vision to make sure we have a modern, fit-for-purpose website that knows the user 'like a friend'.



## Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> June 2019</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>Confidential</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Moberly Sports Centre's First Year</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Andrew Durrant, Director of Community Services</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	<b>Cllr Bott (Sports, Culture and Community)</b>
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	<b>Queens Park</b>
<b>Policy Context:</b>	<b>Moberly Sports Centre is helping to fulfil the Council's City for All 2018/19 objectives by offering excellent local services, having a role in providing a healthier and greener City and being a facility that hosts a number of activities that celebrate our communities.</b>
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	<b>Dominic Wilde x1363</b> <a href="mailto:dwilde@westminster.gov.uk">dwilde@westminster.gov.uk</a>

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The 'Active Queens Park' project is improving the quality and size of sports facilities offered in this neighbourhood, with the redevelopment of the Council's Moberly and Jubilee Sports Centre sites a significant part of this. The Active Queens Park regeneration initially provided a new 3G artificial sports pitch at St Augustine's School and implemented enhancements such as floodlighting, new fencing and a new outdoor gym to the free to access sports pitch area at Queens Park Gardens, all of which are now in use.
- 1.2 The redevelopment of Moberly and Jubilee Sport Centres, has created the new flagship £26m, 80,000 sq. ft Moberly Sports Centre (Phase 1), which is providing the first new public swimming pool in 40 years. Moberly Sports Centre opened on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018, the originally intended month, with the Jubilee Community Sports Centre to follow (Phase 2). After the completion of Phase 2, 155 homes and a retail shop will also be provided across the two sites.

- 1.3 The previous two aging sports centres were costing the Council £600k per year in subsidy despite investment and were no longer providing sports or community facilities that were fit for purpose. The new sports centres are now a key component of the net positive contribution to the Council via the management fee from the leisure operator contract with Everyone Active.
- 1.4 In 10 months, the number of users at Moberly Sports Centre has surpassed expectations and significantly exceeded the annual target. This report will provide a review on the performance and types of activities taking place at Moberly Sports Centre with the objective of gaining a steer on what the Council's objectives should be over future years.
- 1.5 Table 1, outlines the outcomes the Council wanted to achieve when the project was originally considered together with high level commentary on what has been delivered across this Active Queens Park investment.

**Table 1: Project Review**

Issue / Initial objective	Delivered	Comment
Poor standard of facilities, a need to invest and improve	At Moberly Sports Centre, an excellent and popular facility which provides activities for all levels of participation from community, club and regional use	Supports significant change through the ActiveWestminster Strategy
£600k deficit per annum	Supports a net positive contribution to the UK's leading leisure operator management fee	
Consolidation into one facility at Moberly Sports Centre	The large Moberly Sports Centre (Phase 1) open, with a small community-based facility at Jubilee Sports Centre to follow (Phase 2)	After significant local opposition during the original public consultation, the Council decided to retain a facility in both locations

- 1.6 The commencement of Phase 2 is currently delayed by reduced financial viability culminating from increased construction costs and a poorer residential sales market. Council Officers are in negotiations with the development partner, EcoWorld, with the intention of reaching an agreed proposal. In this phase, Jubilee Community Sports Centre will provide a 3-court sports hall and a community room suitable for a variety of activities.

## **2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration**

- 2.1 With regard to the first year's use of Moberly Sports Centre, as described in more detail in section 3, it would be helpful to have a steer on the following three questions:
- 2.2 **The current facilities and activities offered at Moberly Sports Centre are shown in this report's section 3. Are there other activities, services or users the Council should consider providing or hosting, that are important to the Queens Park neighbourhood?**
- 2.3 **Through the provision of Moberly Sports Centre, are there any additional Physical Activity, Leisure or Sports events, or community-based activities, that the Council should be supporting as part of the wider ActiveWestminster Strategy in the local area?**
- 2.4 **A key principle of the ActiveWestminster strategy is to increase effective communication and raise awareness to clubs, community groups and schools as outlined in Section 3. Whilst this is an emerging area, Officers welcome recommendations of other channels and methods of communication, that should be considered?**

## **3. Background**

### **Facilities and Activities**

- 3.1 This redevelopment of the new Moberly Sports Centre is part of the Active Westminster Physical Activity, Leisure and Sport Strategy (2018-2022). Moberly Sport Centre is one of the main Council's investments, as a new Active Place, that is intended to provide high quality sports and leisure facilities to the local community.
- 3.2 In the final year before the Moberly and Jubilee Sports Centres closed, the total number of visits per annum across both of these facilities totalled 285,000. Over the first 10 months since opening, Moberly Sports Centre has significantly surpassed its usage targets with the total number of visits being 444,000 between July 2018 to April 2019. A pertinent way of showing how this new facility and the Council is performing against the original promises made on the project, is a review of the Council KPI's agreed with Sport England.
- 3.3 Sport England made a £1m funding contribution towards the cost of providing the new Moberly Sports Centre. This funding was attached to several agreed performance related KPI's which were forecast over a 5-year period. The success of this new facility can be measured in the following Table 2 which provides existing usage information across the original Moberly and Jubilee Sports Centres, the KPI's and the actual usage of Moberly Sports Centre alone.
- 3.4 By the end of its first year Moberly Sports Centre is expected to exceed several significant milestones. This Sports Centre in its first year has within 10 months already exceed the 5-year swimming lesson and 5-year gym member KPI's and

is expected to exceed the 5-year total visits KPI by having an expected 500,000 visits.

**Table 2: Moberly Sports Centre Usage Summary**

Activity / Year	Existing	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
<b>Total Visits</b>	285,000					
<b>KPI</b>		360,000	405,000	450,000	472,500	495,000
<b>Actual</b>		<b>444,000*</b>				
<b>Swimming Lessons</b>	5,200					
<b>KPI</b>		5,920	6,660	7,400	7,770	8,140
<b>Actual</b>		<b>9,998**</b>				
<b>Gym Members</b>	1,526					
<b>KPI</b>		2,800	3,150	3,500	3,675	3,850
<b>Actual</b>		<b>4,512*</b>				

\* To April 2019

\*\* Annual estimate from our operator, Everyone Active

3.5 In the same 10-month period, 19,873 unique individual users have visited Moberly Sports Centre. Within this total, the sports centre has 4,512 fitness suite (gym) monthly members and 1,045 swim lesson members (both of these 10-month figures are the highest memberships in the Everyone Active Westminster portfolio). The number of individual users is comparatively high compared to other sports centres which underlines the demand for quality facilities and both a wide coverage of users and a broad variety of facilities on offer. Usage data held confirms a broad range of ages use the facility and the gender split is generally even between male and female.

3.6 Moberly Sports Centre provides the following facilities:

- 25m, 6 lane swimming pool
- Separate teaching swimming pool with moveable floor
- 8 court sports hall with 500 retractable spectator seats
- 100 station fitness suite (gym)
- Dedicated gymnastics suite
- Spa and treatment rooms



- Multi-purpose activity hall suitable for boxing and martial arts
- Community rooms suitable for multi-sensory, soft play, community meetings and birthday parties
- 2 exercise and dance studios
- Crussh café
- Changing places facility suitable for disabled users and their carers

3.7 This new facility has proven very popular, the Council in partnership with our operator Everyone Active, are providing a facility that supports a variety of users from first time, community, competitive and national level activities. As shown beneath there are five new clubs that were not present at the old Moberly and Jubilee Sports Centres and they offer dance, martial arts, soft play, swimming and all-round sports activities.

3.8 There a significant variety of clubs, currently totalling 29, actively using Moberly Sports Centre on a regular basis. These are shown in the following table 3 with several notable achievements as shown:

**Table 3: Clubs and Community Groups**

Activity	Club / Group	New Addition?	Achievement
Badminton	London Tigers		
Basketball	Westminster Warriors Basketball Club		Division 1 Winners
Cheerleading	Angels Cheerleading		Grand National Champions
Community	Open Age (activities for 50 years plus)		
Community	Muslim Culture, Friday Prayer Group		
Community	Sport For Confidence (inclusive sports for people with a disability, are homeless or with complex health needs)	New Addition	
Dance	Dance Flies		
Dance	5 Rhythms Dance (Free Flow)	New Addition	
Football	Salhuddin Trust Football		
Football	Sudanese Youth Football		
Futsal	London Helvecia Futsal Club		Premier League Futsal Winners
Futsal	West London Futsal Club		
Gymnastics	Bridge Park Gymnastics Club		
Gymnastics	City of London Gymnastics		
Martial Arts / Self Defence	Britannia Karate		

Martial Arts / Self Defence	Choi Kwang Do (Female Only)	New addition	
Martial Arts / Self Defence	London Self Defence Academy		
Martial Arts / Self Defence	Moberly Judo Club		
Martial Arts / Self Defence	Taekwondo		
Netball	Westminster Renegades (Girls Netball)		
Soft Play & Children	Kiddikicks		
Soft Play & Children	Maida Vale Soft-Play Club	New addition	
Soft Play & Children	Little Kickers		
Swimming	Chelsea & Westminster Swim Club	New addition	
Table Tennis	Moberly Table Tennis Club		
Volleyball	Iranian Volleyball Club		
Volleyball	Onyx Volleyball Club		
Volleyball	Polonia Ladies Volleyball Club		Compete in Super League, National Volleyball League, London Premier League, London League Division 1 & the National Cup
Volleyball	Westminster Volleyball Club		

3.9 Through the provision of the new sports centre, the Council has formed close partnerships with 26 local schools who are actively using the new facilities:

Ark Atwood School
Ark Brunel School
Ark Franklin School
Bales College School
Essendine Primary School
Islamia Primary School
Kilburn Park Foundation School
Marylebone Boys Secondary School
Portland Place
Queens Park School
Queens College Prep School

Rosa Home Education School
Russian Embassy School
Salisbury School
Southbank International
St Augustines School
St Edwards School
St Johns Wood School
St Lukes Primary School
St Mary Of Magdalene School
St Marylebone Bridge School
St Peters Primary School
St Thomas Primary School
Westminster Kingsway College
Wetherby School
Wilberforce Primary School

3.10 Moberly Sports Centre has also attracted a whole host of special booking events from Community, Council and National Television activities and include the following:

- City West Homes Open Day
- Clair Scott Fashion Show
- Flowmotion Yoga
- Formula Kidz (Indoor inflatable Go-Karts)
- The Last Leg (Channel 4 TV)
- National Childbirth Trust Baby Show
- Sponge Ltd (Swimming Technic filming)
- Strictly Come Dancing (BBC TV)

### **Communication and Awareness**

3.11 Improved communication and marketing is an integral strand of the new ActiveWestminster strategy, it is recognised that the full-service offer is sometimes not known by residents, schools and community groups. The Council is part of a number of initiatives to promote increased participation for all our residents and visitors. The Council is an early adopter of OpenActive, which harnesses data and activities online to encourage more local people to take up physical activity.

3.12 Council Officers work closely with local schools via network meetings each term which bring together all school PE co-ordinators for updates on services provided, to collect feedback and offer support. There is also a very active partnership with community groups and clubs. Current information on activities being offered, together with spreading awareness of funding opportunities and how to gain volunteer support is shared.

3.13 In the ActiveWestminster, Physical Activity, Leisure & Sport (PALS) strategy 2018-2022, 'Activate Your City Lives & Neighbourhoods', the Council has committed to the maximisation of digital technology to promote timely and

relevant leisure opportunities. This includes utilising open data through a dedicated ActiveWestminster website designed to be the 'one front door' for all physical activity, leisure and sport opportunities across Westminster. This website incorporates an open data activity finder as well as being supported by the new ActiveWestminster app. Both the website and app were launched internally in March 2018 and the public launch is anticipated to be part of the annual ActiveWestminster weekend on 31 August / 1 September 2019, to coincide with the (re)launch of the ActiveWestminster Card.

- 3.14 The vision is to provide users with a seamless, quick, search experience through the ActiveWestminster activity finder, demonstrating the opportunities presented by open data. They will be able to find hundreds of opportunities and activities in one place. The app will enable users to instantly find any type of activity on offer right next to where they are, at any given time.
- 3.15 The Council is also utilising larger scale platforms. Through working with our ActiveWestminster partners on this year's Westminster Mile, this event was trending at Number 2 on Twitter in London, approximately 4.5 million users were reached via social media and BBC iPlayer had 55,000 views. Activities are also promoted via Facebook and Instagram.

#### **Final Comment**

- 3.16 2018-2019 has been a very successful year for Moberly Sports Centre as shown by the target beating number of visits and activities taking place which has worked well alongside the number and breadth of clubs, schools and events enjoying this new facility. The Council's Community Services team will look to continue this momentum over future years with the steer on key matters to be considered further helping to enable this.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Dominic Wilde x1363**  
[dwilde@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:dwilde@westminster.gov.uk)

#### **APPENDIX:**

- **Please find attached a copy of the presentation that will be delivered on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

# Policy & Scrutiny

## 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019

# Moberly Sports Centre's 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary

24th June 2019



City of Westminster



# YOUR CITY, LIVES & NEIGHBOURHOODS



# Our Vision is to: Activate Your City, Lives & Neighbourhoods

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This vision will be at the very heart of all we do and will be achieved by working together and applying our **PACE** principles of **Promote, Activate, Collaborate** and **Enable**. We enable people to be physically active, where, when and how they choose and we will actively promote the fundamental contribution that physical activity, leisure and sport makes in individual physical and mental wellbeing, our economy, our community and the development of our city.

# Moberly - A £26m Sports Centre for Queen's Park

- Innovative Partnership Model with Developer, EcoWorld (formerly Willmott Dixon)
- New centre located on Chamberlyne Road, Kensal Rise – a community hub for the area
- First new public swimming pool opened by WCC in 40 years!





# Facilities

- 25 metre Swimming Pool
- Separate learner pool with moveable floor
- 8 court sports hall with 500 retractable spectator seats
- 100 station fitness suite
- Dedicated gymnastics hall
- Spa and treatment rooms
- Multi purpose activity hall suitable for boxing and martial arts
- Community rooms suitable for multi sensory and soft play, community meetings and birthday parties
- 2 exercise and dance studios
- CRUSSH Café
- Changing Places facility suitable for disabled users and their carers

# A popular facility - 29 Clubs, 26 Schools and Strictly Come Dancing (one of eight types of event)

Community Sports Clubs & Community Groups include:

- Angels cheerleading
- OpenAge
- Muslim Culture – Friday Prayer Group
- Sport for Confidence
- Dance Flies
- 5 Rhythms Dance
- Bridge Park Gymnastics Club
- City of London Gymnastics
- Britannia Karate
- Choi Kwang Do
- London Self Defence Academy
- Moberly Judo Club
- Taekwondo
- Little Kickers
- Kiddikicks
- Maida Vale Soft play club
- Westminster Warriors Basketball Club
- Westminster Renegades Netball
- Iranian Volleyball Club
- Oynx Volleyball Club
- Polonia Volleyball Club
- Westminster Volleyball Club
- Salhuddin Trust Football
- Sudanese Youth Football
- London Helvecia Futsal Club
- West London Futsal Club
- Moberly Table Tennis Club
- London Tigers Badminton
- Chelsea & Westminster Swim Club



# Moberly's first year



**WESTMINSTER WARRIORS**  
COMMUNITY BASKETBALL

**MENS BASKETBALL**  
MOBERLY SPORTS CENTRE  
FRIDAY 8 TO 10

**WOMENS BASKETBALL**  
CAPITAL CITY ACADEMY  
TUESDAY 8 TO 10PM

**JUNIOR 14-18 BASKETBALL**  
PADDINGTON ACADEMY  
FRIDAY 6 TO 9PM

**UNDER 14s BASKETBALL**  
MOBERLY SPORTS CENTRE  
SATURDAY 12 TO 2PM

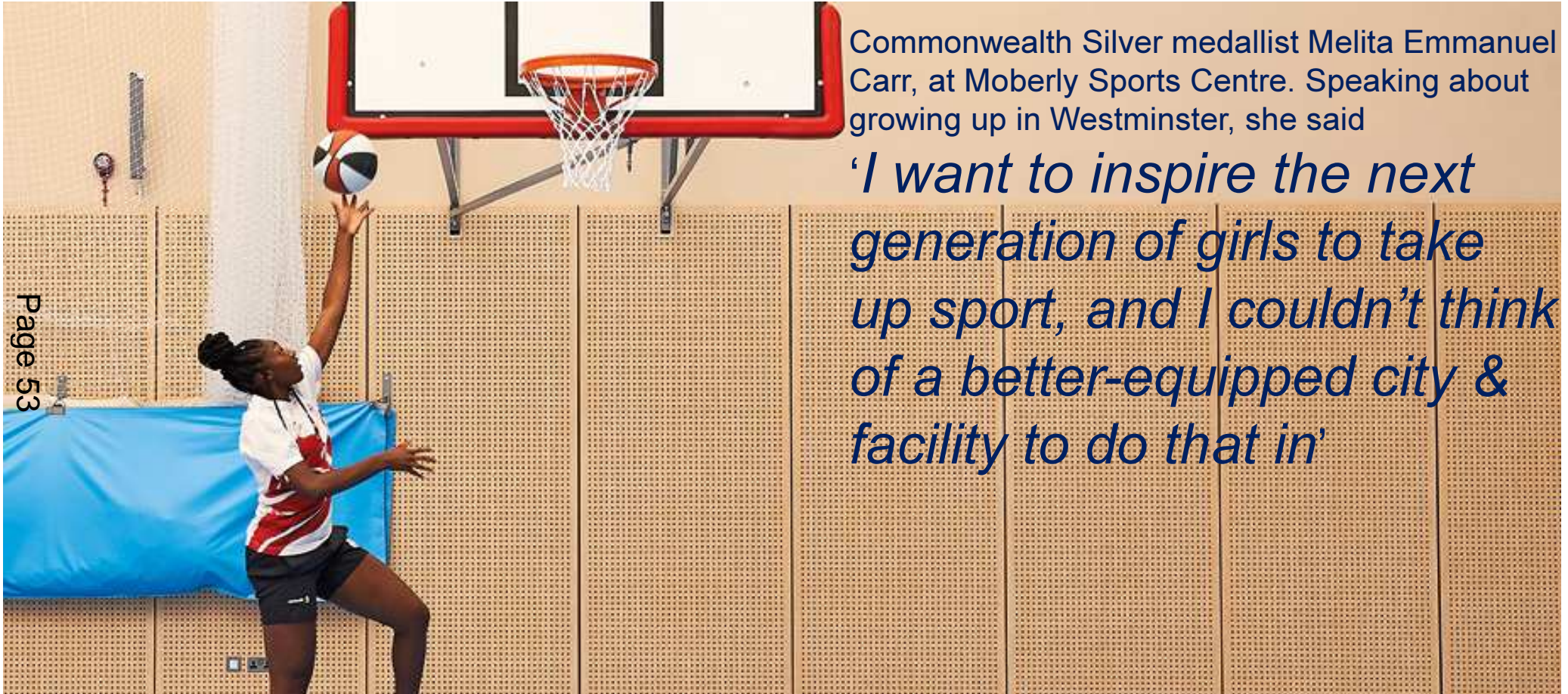
FOR MORE INFO  
CONTACT 07462 566 674  
OR 07958 499 272

everyone ACTIVE City of Westminster



# Melita Emmanuel Carr

## Team GB & Team England Basketball



Commonwealth Silver medallist Melita Emmanuel Carr, at Moberly Sports Centre. Speaking about growing up in Westminster, she said

*'I want to inspire the next generation of girls to take up sport, and I couldn't think of a better-equipped city & facility to do that in'*

# Going from Strength to Strength

## 10 Month stats

- over **444,000 visits** in 10 months (2018/19, annual target: 306,000)
- **4,512** gym members (2,800 annual target)
- **1,045** Learn to swim programme and **9,998** lessons (5,920 lesson annual target)
- Highest figures in the Westminster leisure contract proving just how well received the new facilities have been
- The facility's performance and the Leisure Contract continues to help with MTP savings for the Council
- In Phase 2, Jubilee Community Sports Centre will provide a 3 court sports hall and community room



Max Whitlock – Double Gold Olympic Medallist at Moberly Sports Centre



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# Communication and Outreach

- Daily interactions alongside more strategic network meetings with local **Schools**
- **Club and Community group** partnerships and regular **ActiveWestminster** newsletter
- **ActiveWestminster website** launching publicly by September 2019
- **ActiveWestminster App**, live activity finder
- **Open Active website**, Community activity sharing
- **Social Media** outreach, **Westminster Mile**

**Number 2 Trending on Twitter** in London

**4.5 million** social media audience

**55,000 views** on BBC iPlayer





# Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

Are there other activities, services or users the Council should consider providing or hosting, that are important to the Queens Park neighbourhood?

Through the provision of Moberly Sports Centre, are there any additional Physical Activity, Leisure or Sports events, or community-based activities, that the Council should be supporting as part of the wider ActiveWestminster Strategy in the local area?

A key principle of the ActiveWestminster strategy is to increase effective communication and raise awareness to clubs, community groups and schools. Whilst this is an emerging area, Officers welcome recommendations of other channels and methods of communication, that should be considered?



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## **Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee**

<b>Date:</b>	24 June 2109
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Libraries Service – Report of the Independent Libraries Advisory Board and Development of Future Strategic Direction for the Service</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Sara Sutton, Executive Director City Management and Communities
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Sports, Culture and Community
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	City that offers excellent local services
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	<b>Mike Clarke, Director of Libraries &amp; Registration Services</b> <a href="mailto:mclarke1@westminster.gov.uk">mclarke1@westminster.gov.uk</a>

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. The Council established an independent advisory board to provide it with external advice on the long term future for the library service. The board's role was to consider all internal and external challenges and opportunities, and to make recommendations for how the council and the service could best prepare for the future, making the most of resources and expenditure to deliver key outcomes.
- 1.2. Following a comprehensive work programming spanning many months, the Libraries Advisory Board published its findings and its specific recommendations to the council. The report (attached at appendix 1) was received by the Council's Cabinet on 25 March 2019. As it is an independent report, the council is not obliged to adopt its recommendations, but is invited to consider and respond. The Committee is likewise asked for its views and any comments on the report.

- 1.3. The publication of this independent report provides us with a valuable perspective on the future of Westminster's library and archive services but we want to hear views from everyone who uses our libraries – and those that work to deliver the services in a daily basis – so that they can play an active role in shaping the libraries they want in their community. An extensive programme of engagement and consultation is therefore planned, to bring staff, users, residents and a range of other stakeholders into the conversation.
- 1.4. In line with the views of the board it was agreed that the first major step in this engagement process should focus on libraries staff. They will be crucial not only to the process of developing the future strategy for the service, but also delivering it on the ground. With the aim of capturing their unique perspective and expertise, three dedicated workshop sessions took place in libraries around the city in May. Libraries and Archives staff at all levels were invited to consider the findings and recommendations of the independent board, giving their views on feasibility and generating additional ideas or anything they feel the board might have missed. The sessions were well attended and interactive. Outputs from those workshops are now being written up and will be analysed as we progress with further engagement and review. A further session is being planned to engage additional staff across other council services, to recognise the cross-portfolio nature of this work. Once this has been completed there will be a full write up of feedback from the staff engagement phase. This can be made available to member of the Committee at the end of July, if desired.
- 1.5. Another important stage of the engagement process will be understanding the views of Councillors. Dedicated Members' engagement sessions are being scheduled - dates will be finalised as soon as possible but current proposals are for 26 June and the week commencing 22 July 2019. As indicated by the breadth of the board's recommendations, which reach right across all City for All themes, there are potential links and opportunities relating almost every Cabinet portfolio. The board was emphatic about the value of libraries engaging and working with all council departments to understand how they can deliver on strategic priorities together. With this in mind we are keen to involve Members across all portfolios and areas of interest, to help us to develop our future vision in a collaborative way.
- 1.6. There are plans to hold a stakeholder engagement event, also proposed for July, which will involve key partners and interested parties in the process. The aim is to engage with a wide range of organisations and groups that have an interest in public library provision, some of whom have already had some contact with the Advisory Board and its work. Through these sessions we will gather fresh perspectives from key stakeholders and raise awareness of the work that Westminster is doing to develop the future of its libraries service.
- 1.7. Finally, there will of course be extensive engagement with Westminster's residents and library users themselves. With a range of activities proposed to take place in libraries right across the city in the coming weeks and months, we aim to gather comments, ideas and feedback from everyone who uses libraries and had an interest in their future. We want to understand nuances in views across different neighbourhoods, and identify wider themes, to ensure that our

developing strategy reflects the wants and needs of the community. This underlines the council's commitment to enabling people to have a real voice – and an ongoing role – in shaping their own local libraries and archive services.

- 1.8. Key issues the Committee may wish to consider, including our plans for consultation and engagement, are detailed in section 5 below. Feedback from the Committee will inform the council's response and developing strategy for the libraries service in Westminster.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. The independent Libraries Advisory Board was set up by the Council at a time of change and challenge for public libraries nationally and in Westminster. The Council faces significant financial pressures and libraries may have to increase commercial income, reduce costs and deliver services differently. Nationally, public library use has been in long term decline, although Westminster shows some signs of bucking that trend, it is vital to consider how to keep the service relevant and cost effective.
- 2.2. There is a statutory requirement to provide a library service, but the extent of the service is up to local councils to determine and variation in service levels and models of delivery is considerable across authorities in London and more widely. Westminster provides over and above what most London boroughs offer and its per capita spend is the highest in the country. The council faces a challenging financial environment where efficiency is vital, and the service will need to build on its previous track record for innovation to ensure it is sustainable and fit for the future.
- 2.3. Library use is changing. As the board noted, fewer than a quarter of library users now borrows a book on their visit. Westminster's library users are more likely to be there for events, information (including referral to other public services) or study. This gives rise to challenges for the service – to provide more materials in a wider range of formats than ever before, and different spaces for different uses. This means meeting diverse needs in one place - at its most simplistic separating noisy events such as under-5s sessions from those who want quiet study.
- 2.4. The challenge to the service, then, is to continue to provide for existing uses (already a diverse range in its own right) and develop new offers that will keep libraries relevant to a broad range of the population, including the provision of new libraries to replace existing outmoded services, at a time of continuing financial pressure.

## **3. The Libraries Board's Recommendations**

- 3.1. The independent Libraries Advisory Board published its report and recommendations for the future of Westminster's library services in March 2019.

The recommendations acknowledge and reflect the capacity for libraries to act as a key driver for all five of the core City for All themes, as follows:

- 3.1.1. **Libraries help make Westminster a city of opportunity** – driving literacy and digital literacy and supporting local prosperity. The board sees two potential strands of work here – one focusing closely on libraries’ primary, traditional purpose of increasing literacy, encouraging reading and education in a range of forms. There is an emphasis on improving our digital offer, using technology to support inclusion, connectivity and lifelong learning. The second strand of this recommendation focuses on supporting local enterprise and the business community. The board urges the city council to develop a specific strategy for skills development, business and entrepreneurship and to build relationships with key partners to deliver this. They specifically recommend that Westminster should define a package of employment support to be delivered at each library as part of the core offer, including a range of basic support with job search, CV and application writing, and presentational skills. Specialist career advice could be offered to complement this. The council may wish to seek inspiration from innovations such as the British Library’s Business and IP Centre, which supports small business owners, entrepreneurs and inventors to develop their skills, network and grow their businesses.
- 3.1.2. **Libraries help support a city that provides excellent local services** – by providing a place that helps make things happen. Here the board saw an opportunity for libraries to act as a key enabler for driving efficiency in other service. They noted that other council services stand to benefit significantly from working through and with libraries and that this, alongside libraries looking at commercialisation and fundraising opportunities as a given, should be something the council actively pursues.
- 3.1.3. **Libraries become a visible advocate for a caring and fairer city** – being accessible spaces that foster community spirit. As trusted places with remarkable reach into the community, the board saw libraries as playing a key role in tackling the ‘loneliness epidemic’. They also emphasised the importance of supporting some of the most vulnerable in society, such as those who are not in a secure housing situation, and becoming dementia friendly spaces. They recognised a potential need for physical changes to buildings and suggested that libraries could look to alternative funding sources to facilitate this.
- 3.1.4. **Libraries help make a healthier and greener city** – acting as a key resource for social prescribing and referrals. The board felt this was about working with partners, whether council colleagues on Making Every Contact Count or connecting with our physical activity strategies, or with academic institutions such as UCL. The board’s specific suggestions including trialling fresh approaches for effective community-based treatments for adult and adolescent depression, dementia and Alzheimer’s disease. This would build on work such as Wakefield’s dementia-friendly library, and the new approach to under-5 ‘rhymetime’ sessions being developed by the Association of Senior Children’s and Education Librarians, which has a focus on better mental health outcomes. Also, in the context of family hubs, to look at how libraries could provide targeted ‘pop-up’ services to support the development and learning among families with

young children. The board also felt that libraries could impact on the council's 'greener' aspirations through things like community gardening, but and by generally acting as a key agent for behaviour change within the community.

- 3.1.5. **Libraries and archives should be focal points for celebrating citizenship, heritage and community based arts and culture** – the board were keen to see libraries as the first place for people to engage with arts, culture and heritage. The board recommended that libraries continue to encourage local arts and culture, making use of digital opportunities to connect with wider audiences and setting ambitious targets for engagement, especially those who might not otherwise access these types of opportunity. There is the specific suggestion that the council might identify a dedicated budget and programme to foster and support local creative talent through libraries.
- 3.2. Within this context the board urges the council to make use of the high levels of trust and accessibility to do more through the library service, working in partnership across key council services to make links and integrate service offers in new ways. This is a key finding of Connecting Libraries, the board's report. The board also recommends infrastructure and service are modernised to achieve this, and a review of assets, services and delivery so that we can ensure the right services are offered in the right places achieving quality and value for money. The board noted a need to balance continuing financial pressure with what would be lost if services simply reduce, while also being aware of the need to respond to social and cultural changes so that Westminster's libraries can be sustainable, relevant and fit for the future. These ideas are explored in more detail in sections 2.12 – 2.17 of the board's report.
- 3.3. Where we are already making progress – there are areas where the service is innovating or progressing along the lines indicated. These include:
- Improving the e-book offer and introducing a new and improved MyLibrary app, helping people to access library collections more easily.
  - Introducing affordable flexible working ("hub") space at Westminster Reference Library as a three month pilot, which may extend to other libraries in future. (Please see attached social media promotions for this initiative – background note 2).
  - Starting a trial allowing people to donate money electronically when the attend an event or wish to support their library.
  - Extending Making Every Contact Count training to further library staff after an initial 100 were trained last year, with staff able to help people who need referrals to other council and health services.

#### **4. Involvement of the Policy & Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.1. The Education, Leisure and Community Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee considered the Board's approach in autumn 2017 and provided some suggestions for areas it should consider. These were:
- The way that digital technology had changed the role of libraries and would continue to change it in the future.

- The diversity of library users in Westminster and the importance of looking at how the service could meet the needs of different users in different parts of the City.
  - The role of libraries as a trusted space offering support, advice and access to services, and the role that library staff play in delivering this.
  - Examples of ‘best practice’ elsewhere, and different models of provision.
- 4.2. The monthly meetings of the Libraries Advisory Board were planned with a thematic approach, giving a structured and comprehensive work programme. This enabled each of the topics highlighted by the P&S Committee to benefit from focused consideration and many points arising from these debates are reflected within the board’s final report and recommendations.

### **Effective Use of Digital**

- 4.3. At a session dedicated to the future role of digital in library services the board heard about the work of Kent’s Arts and Libraries service on digital inclusion – especially for older people – with a view to tackling isolation, and from Wimbletech CIC who offer workspace and connectivity in libraries for local entrepreneurs. A presentation from Kings College Library also highlighted opportunities to modernise library and archive services with digital solutions such as online content, flexible location working and increased self-service. In its final report the board reflects on the value of maintaining libraries as a focal point at the heart of the community, for local businesses as well as residents. The board urges the council to strike a balance, utilising technological solutions which enhance that role rather than compromise it. These issues are looked at in most detail in strands one and two of the first recommendation (page 17-19) of the report.

### **Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Community**

- 4.4. The Advisory Board was frequently reminded of the diversity of the communities our libraries serve and the range of roles and functions they have in people’s lives. The board noted that libraries have unusual breadth of accessibility and of appeal. The wide range of services, many of which are provided free of charge, and the welcoming, non-stigmatising environment, mean that libraries attract people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. The board was struck by libraries’ important role in engaging people, bringing them together to learn and share experiences, and in promoting interest in local history and heritage. Libraries’ role in fostering community spirit, connectedness and shared experiences is referenced under recommendation three (page 22-23) of the report.
- 4.5. Equally board members were interested in ways to build flexibility into the service model, to ensure libraries meet specific local needs. They considered options around providing a ‘core’ of basic services across all sites, layering on top some more customised elements to address specific requirements in



individual neighbourhoods. The board has indicated an interest in how these concepts could be developed further.

### **Libraries as a Trusted Place**

- 4.6. The board were struck by the level of trust many service users place in libraries as somewhere they can find information, seek support and navigate the wider council services landscape. Libraries can offer a place and a voice for some of the most vulnerable in society and in their report the board highlights how this directly aligns with the council's City for All vision. Board members were keenly aware of the responsibility libraries have to ensure libraries are, as a given, as accessible as possible. This is highlighted under recommendation three (page 22) on the need for any new libraries to be "inclusive from go" as a core part of their ethos, underlining their view that the service should always seek to be proactive in its approach to inclusion.
- 4.7. This also relies heavily on libraries staff to champion the approach. Whatever the Council's response to the Advisory Board's recommendations, engagement and active involvement by staff is essential and requires them to act as advocates for the libraries within communities.

### **Best Practice and Delivery Models**

- 4.8. Learning from others was a central part of the board's approach, and through its thematic sessions the group sought perspectives from central government, local authorities around the country, academic institutions and others. Some of the partners the board heard from included:
- London Borough of Lewisham, which runs some of its libraries in partnership with voluntary organisations having made an "open call" to the voluntary sector to become involved. The service has been able to reduce its costs whilst increasing visitor numbers. At the same meeting, Hammersmith and Fulham Citizens' Advice talked about running a library using its volunteers along with support and advice from the council, at its main office and advice centre.
  - Libraries Unlimited, an employee-led social enterprise and trust, which spun out of Devon County Council and now provides the library service for Devon and neighbouring Torbay unitary authority. The key takeaway was the passion for a high quality service and ability to invest in staff with training and development focused on their service and user needs.
  - Kings College London, which gave a different perspective with a strong focus on the student as the customer, leading them to extend opening dramatically and change working practices.
- 4.9. The board also engaged with directorate leads across the council to hear about their experiences of working with libraries to deliver their departmental objectives libraries – and what more could be done - and conducted visits to libraries and archives in many of Westminster's neighbourhoods to witness the services first hand. This evidence-based approach, which was recommended by the Committee, enabled the board to develop a robust and informed view of

the factors that tend to make a well run library. They captured much of their learning in a detailed appendix to their final report (attached at appendix 3), which, along with references to many case studies throughout the document, show how an understanding what has worked elsewhere underpins the board recommendations to the service here in Westminster.

## **5. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration**

- 5.1. The Committee is asked to note this update on the progress of the Libraries Advisory Board and its response to the specific points raised by the Committee in 2017.
- 5.2. As a key consultee in the process of responding to the board's recommendations and shaping the long term strategy for library services in Westminster, the Committee is further invited to consider the following:
  - The advisory board makes a number of recommendations aligned with the five core City for All themes. Does the Committee have views on any of the recommendations?
  - In line with an overall vision of 'Connecting Libraries' the board recommends that libraries work to strengthen links and drive service integration with departments across the council, capitalising on their accessibility and trust relationship with the community to engage people in a range of local services. Does the Committee have any views on particular areas of opportunity for this?
  - Does the Committee have views on the proposals for engagement and consultation?
  - Is there anything additional that the Committee feels not been covered, or fully covered, in the board's explorations of the issue so far, which the council might usefully consider as it develops its future strategy?

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the  
Background Papers, please contact Mike Clarke**  
[mclarke@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:mclarke@westminster.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES**

1. Connected Libraries: Report of the Independent Libraries Advisory Board to Westminster City Council – Full version
2. Connected Libraries: Report of the Independent Libraries Advisory Board to Westminster City Council – Summary version
3. Appendix to the board report – Precis of Minutes of Board Sessions

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Background briefing 1: *Background on Westminster's Library and Archive Services*

Background briefing 2: *Promotion of flexible work space initiative at Westminster Reference Library*

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# CONNECTING LIBRARIES

The report of the independent advisory board on libraries to Westminster City Council



A photograph of a woman and a man in a library. The woman is on the left, standing and looking at books on a high shelf. The man is on the right, kneeling and looking at books on a lower shelf. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter. A white vertical bar is positioned in the center, containing the text 'INTRODUCTION'.

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 / Foreword from the Board Chair

Westminster City Council established a Libraries Advisory Board in 2017 with the aim of engaging expertise at a time of profound change in local government, to assist it to determine the medium and longer-term future direction for its public libraries and archives.

Westminster's libraries have a strong base of a valued and well-used service to build the future on, including its regionally and nationally important archive, music and special collections. The operation of the service was remodelled in 2017<sup>1</sup> to ensure value for money and to help make it fit for the future in the light of local government austerity, but the Council wanted to look at what needs to happen next.

To begin with, we want to dismiss the notion that libraries are only about buildings as expensive receptacles of books and cosy places serving primarily the more affluent resident.

It is clear to the Board, through our visits and research, that libraries and the people who work in them are in an enviable position of trust, and that the benefits of a good quality library service are appreciated by its users and more widely in the community. The library service needs to find ways of encouraging a greater number of non-users to engage with libraries. Although councils have a statutory duty to provide a free public library service, it needs to generate a high level of take-up to justify expenditure and continued investment.

Nationally and internationally, public libraries are going through a renaissance, both in terms of the social infrastructure they provide, and the broadening of services and experiences they offer. At our sessions, we heard about libraries in Denmark (Aarhus), Finland (the new Helsinki library), and in other major British cities such as Birmingham and Manchester, and these examples formed the Board's strong view that libraries are already community facilities and assets, and given the right nurturing they could become a key focus of community activity and strengthen community pride and sense of place.

They are increasingly playing a key role in the provision of collaborative and diverse workspaces for the community as well as evolving into hubs for education, health, entertainment, and work. Libraries are encouraging people back into the physical space, by providing facilities and services people want, such as coffee shops, access to free Wi-Fi, child care programmes, health and lifestyle classes, senior citizen contact opportunities, and much more; while the 'walls' of libraries continue to expand beyond the physical space, with online resources, social media and mobile apps changing how collections and services are delivered.

Apart from our own deliberations and site visits, we have had working sessions covering effective use of digital services, the integration of better ways to serve the community jointly with other public services in Westminster, alternative delivery models, the value of cultural and heritage collections and services, and libraries' role in supporting communities to come together.

A full precis of the board's discussions and presentations to the group at board meetings is available to view online, as an appendix to this report. Also available are biographies of the board members. Both of these can be found at [westminster.gov.uk/help-shape-future-libraries-westminster](https://westminster.gov.uk/help-shape-future-libraries-westminster).

<sup>1</sup> Future delivery of the library service: Report to the Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Community by Director of Libraries and Culture, 28.11.16

## Board visits to libraries

We visited libraries at different times of the day, which made us realise the true range of activities that take place and the varied reasons why people use them. The popular misconception is that public libraries are entirely about lending books, to a shrinking number of users. **Our visits convinced us that a well-run library service:**

- offers a wide range of reading materials in digital as well as print formats with collections tailored to local need;
- supports community development as a hub for activity and access;
- provide learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds;
- supports economic development by providing a reason for people to visit the neighbourhood, as well as helping people with skills; and
- introduces people to technology, helping bridge the digital divide.

### 1.2 / How to move forward

Despite these consuming sessions, I am all too conscious that there are many strategic strands to develop and we have only been dipping our toes into what a library service of the future might look like. It is not about painting a detailed picture, but some clear and strong themes came to the surface from all presentations and discussions. Above all, presentations demonstrated the need for passionate commitment by all stakeholders, and the will to come up with and implement a robust bold vision. Passion and committed engagement are essential to drive forward innovation, community engagement and develop a beacon service for the wide and diverse communities that make use of libraries. This is true whether it is providing strategic leadership, front line services or as a partner.

Severe financial cuts, as we heard about in Lewisham, could have led to library services imploding. But through the passionate hard work and creative thinking of many individuals, with a range of stakeholder interests being engaged, change has been effected for the good, and use of library services there has increased. This underlines what can positively be achieved by combining genuine commitment to the service on the part of the local authority with effective use of available resources and harnessing of community support, enabling a continuing and thriving library service.

This report advocates for a continuing and strong role for public library services in the City of Westminster, and **aims to enlighten the reader about the value of libraries and how they have an important place in the development of the city**, as it is articulated in the draft City Plan going forward to 2040.

I hope the Cabinet, Councillors, officers, the library and archive service, residents, stakeholders, potential partners and external advisors, all of whom this report is aimed at, will investigate, debate and take forward the thoughts and ideas in it, in order to develop the service in the future. I trust this work will assist in strengthening the future of the service, clarifying its future direction of travel together with the investment the Council makes in its public library services.



### 1.3 / Acknowledgments and thanks

I would like to thank the many people who have assisted the Library Advisory Board, for the time and commitment that has been given. I think we have covered a large spectrum of issues over the past year. The contributions from participants, the Board, officers including libraries director Mike Clarke and his team, Councillors David Harvey and Guthrie McKie, who observed the Board in action, library staff, and members of library friends groups. They are listed in Appendix 1, together with brief biographies of presenters and Board members.

Importantly, I would also like to thank all those who presented at Board sessions, sharing their expertise and perspectives as guest speakers. Presentations to the Board have been excellent and wide-ranging, inspiring and thought-provoking. Each session is written up in Appendix 2 and that overview is well worth reading.

We had presentations and question and answer sessions from the director of libraries at Arts Council England, the chair of the Society of Chief Librarians, members of the Kent Arts and Libraries team, the head of Lewisham library services, the managing director of social enterprise Wimbletech on start-up business working in collaboration with libraries; passionate delivery from Ciara Eastell OBE, of Devon's Libraries Unlimited, and by the deputy chief executive of leisure provider GLL. There was also a perspective from the then director of library services at King's College London and a compelling presentation from the chief executive of the National Libraries Taskforce. Board member Ayub Khan also gave us some interesting observations from his own experiences – as a local government chief officer and president of the librarians' professional body Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) – visiting other library services in the UK and abroad.

All of these inputs greatly influenced Board thinking – and this report – in one way or another and we are immensely grateful to everyone who took time and trouble to come and talk to us. Despite this, the recommendations and conclusions in this report are solely the Board's and we take full ownership of them.

**Chris Cotton DL**

Chair, Westminster Libraries Advisory Board  
London: February 2019



# CONTEXT, BACKGROUND AND FIRST THOUGHTS

**2.1 /** Before we get to the recommendations of the report, we have tried to put them in some context, viewing the recommendations in the light of national ambitions for libraries expressed in the National Libraries Taskforce publication “Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England (2016)”. We have also considered the strategic goals of the City of Westminster expressed in the “City for All” vision. We believe Westminster’s library service can be an exemplar of the Libraries Deliver approach, as well as supporting a range of highly desirable outcomes that the Council wishes to see more broadly.

**2.2 /** Westminster is a unique place. A city within a city, with a global outlook - Westminster has a higher proportion of working-age residents, and a lower proportion of younger and older residents than the London average.<sup>2</sup> Its cultural diversity and range of ethnic backgrounds is immense, and there are wide variations in personal financial resources. Residents interact with an important daily workforce that enjoys many services provided by Westminster City Council, most of whom live, and commute from, elsewhere.

There is a student influx too, with many major seats of learning. There is also a huge tourist pull into the City throughout the year providing significant employment opportunities. Visitors enjoy the shops, the richness of the performing arts, museums, the parks and historic buildings that abound, whilst others are here for the Mother of Parliaments, royal connections or religious history. Public libraries engage with residents, businesses, visitors and students, and the city’s healthy economy, rich mix of cultural activity, and academic credentials should provide opportunities for partnering in the future across a range of fields and activities.

### **2.3 / Libraries Deliver: the national strategy for libraries**

The National Libraries Taskforce was jointly commissioned by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Local Government Association. Libraries Deliver sets out the challenges and opportunities

for libraries at a national level, and makes a strong case for councils to tap into the full potential of libraries to impact on a vast array of potential beneficial outcomes. We have been encouraged by the Taskforce’s findings, which have resonated with what we received during our own investigations. A council that empowers and invests in its library services can unlock their potential to be, at different times, both a driving force and a conduit, acting in conjunction with other services, in delivering many of the strategic aims of the authority.

Libraries Deliver is a positive message with some depth that enriches the future of libraries debate and demonstrates the extraordinary reach that libraries can achieve assisting a wide range of outcomes for communities: delivering value for money, wide opportunities for partnering, and community engagement.

### **2.4 / Libraries help to deliver for Westminster a City for All**

It became clear when compiling the Board’s proposals that the recommendations of Libraries Deliver dovetail into all the themes in the “City for All” vision. This led us to conclude that thriving libraries are in a unique position and important resource to help deliver a “City for All”; from improving health and wellbeing, and building cohesive and ambitious communities, through supporting local enterprise and driving growth, to supporting civic engagement. Many of the “City for All” aspirations can be actively and directly driven through the Council’s libraries offer.

The foundations for this approach exist in Westminster already. We were particularly struck and encouraged by the commitment of senior officers whom we met from the adult social care, children’s, public health and housing departments to engage with library services. Many see libraries as part of key community services, which can assist in the delivery of aspects of their services in a trusted and friendly way.

<sup>2</sup> Westminster census and mid-year estimates, source: ONS, from WCC website

## 2.5 / Changing times, changing libraries

The scope of activity of all public libraries as we know them has evolved since their first inception in the 19th century but no more so than in the last 25 years as the digital society has emerged. The way people produce, consume and store information has been revolutionised. Alongside this societal change, libraries around the country have grown their offer and changed the ways they deliver services. Westminster's libraries and archives are no exception, developing in response to local need and national trends, and providing a mix of services that is specific to the city and the neighbourhoods within it.

2.6 / The Public Libraries Act of 1964 (over half a century ago) set out the duty of every authority "to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons", but the exact scope and quality of service is discretionary, for individual councils to decide. However, there is some consensus: drawing on this, we think a well-run service should provide:

- enjoyment in reading and other cultural and creative activities;
- raise aspirations and building skills so people can achieve their full potential, regardless of background;
- share information actively, encouraging people to engage with, co-create and learn from each other; and
- provide trust and practical support and advice to those who need it.

2.7 / The Act allows councils a lot of leeway in how much they provide and what they expect their library services to do. In recent times, this has meant that councils have decided to close some of their libraries, in many cases reducing the service to a minimum level of provision they think will be legally acceptable. Others have handed libraries over to volunteers to run entirely. This may initially seem attractive as it avoids library closures and maintains an impression of a full service, but in some cases it has resulted in the library service being hollowed out. Expensive buildings are maintained, but little goes on in them,

and over time as use declines, so the argument for closure seems to build up. It should be said, volunteer involvement in libraries is generally beneficial to the service, but where they are properly supported and not used as a substitute for adequate funding.

### The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964

This Act makes public libraries a statutory service. It requires councils (including London boroughs) to ensure there is a "comprehensive and efficient" public library service. Local authorities must:

- provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all people that would like to use it;
- promote the service; and
- lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area.

The Act gives requirements for the range of resources to be provided and the provision of support for people to access the service.

The Government or more specifically, the Secretary of State for Culture, oversees a local authority's role in complying with the Act.

(Source: CILIP briefing on Public Library Act 1964 [2015])

2.8 / The Westminster City Council, by contrast, has one of the best-funded and best-used public library services in the country, in relation to the size of its resident population. The Council's "City for All" vision declares that it wishes to "retain and support Westminster's libraries at the heart of our neighbourhoods."<sup>3</sup> The library service in Westminster provides a wide range of core activity in response to the statutory requirement, as well as a range of additional services that add value and deliver a greatly enhanced library offer (see infographic on page 9). However, a step change is required to allow libraries to fulfil their potential to fully serve, engage with, and contribute to local

3 Working with you to build a City for All, WCC 2018

communities. In Westminster, the retention of 12 public buildings across the city<sup>4</sup> (not counting the separate children’s library at Paddington, and the music, schools and home library services) means that funding is stretched over numerous locations of varying age, suitability and quality, delivering variable services.

Tailoring of services is not always by community need, but sometimes by what the individual building can accommodate. The Board believes that the service is likely to be more effective, and more services better delivered, if a thorough review of needs and standards were to be undertaken in conjunction with a clear set of objectives, which should be developed by the Council following on from this report.

4 The 12 sites are: City of Westminster archives centre, Charing Cross, Church St, Maida Vale, Marylebone, Mayfair, Paddington, Pimlico, Queens Park, St John’s Wood and Victoria libraries and Westminster reference library

## What Westminster’s libraries and archives do



**2.9 /** We also urge Westminster City Council to be bold and not be afraid to try out new ways of working and service offers, building on a strong track record which includes initiatives such as Making Every Contact Count, ESOL<sup>5</sup> for Health, early years Rhymetime sessions and others. The service should take every opportunity and make a clear strategic plan for working with partners to innovate, to make sure libraries continue to retain the relevance and accessibility that clearly attracts so many in our community to use them. At the same time, judgement should be used to select the right service offers that are congruent with the read, learn, connect vision, and any temptation to chase every possible activity or fund to fill spaces and justify existence should be resisted.

**2.10 /** Councillor Richard Beddoe, Westminster City Council Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning, said: *“As we set out to create our city of the future, there is one question that should be at the forefront of our minds in every development we undertake: Will this be an asset to people’s lives? If we can answer this positively every time, the Westminster of 2040 is one we will all want to be a part of.”*

Although the timeline of this report is much shorter, we believe the Council’s determination to make Westminster a world-class city should include the ambition of offering world-class libraries. We think this will contribute to Westminster’s desire to create the city of the future. Singapore presents a possible example. As a small nation state, poor in natural resources, it has invested in the educational and creative potential of its citizens through high quality schools, universities and public libraries. The Singapore government defines a world-class library service as a dynamic library system characterised by convenience, accessibility and usefulness, which cultivates the culture of lifelong learning, creativity and entrepreneurship. (National Library Board’s annual review, 2017/18.<sup>6</sup>)

Chair Heng Kee says: *“our vision[is] to create readers for life, learning communities and a knowledgeable nation. The role of libraries*

*today goes beyond providing books. As Singapore gears up for the future economy, it is also important that we help people keep abreast of global trends and the developments in a fast-growing world.”*

**2.11 /** While the exact nature of the services libraries provide has changed over the years, their underlying purpose has remained constant. Public libraries have always existed to support all people in bettering their circumstances – regardless of their current situation. The original legislation in 1850 established the principle of free public libraries, and it was considered their core purpose to promote literacy, reading and learning that would enable self-improvement and reduce levels of crime. Although this assumption was borne from middle-class paternalism, the argument has been refined over the years and there is now a strong evidence-based link between levels of literacy and levels of crime, as well as with health, self-advancement, job opportunities, and happy retirement. For example, the Shannon Trust, which works with prisoners to improve their reading and literacy, says: *“Learning to read isn’t just a brilliant thing, it changes lives. It builds confidence, helps keep people connected and makes the world an easier place to live. It makes the impossible, possible. [Our] Reading Plan is helping people in prison.”<sup>7</sup>*

Libraries continue to help deliver a range of socially beneficial outcomes through their core purpose of encouraging lifelong reading and learning.

### **2.12 / Broad yet purposeful focus**

We are not advocating that libraries should be all things to all people. Libraries should become engaged where they can make a difference – carefully prioritising where to engage, in consultation with colleagues and users. It is the fundamental purpose of libraries – to promote reading and learning – that has an under-recognised impact on a range of outcomes. The Council should recognise this potential and exploit it by targeted investment and much-improved partnership in some key areas.

<sup>5</sup> English for speakers of other languages, a variety of courses by a number of different providers are available in Westminster’s libraries

<sup>6</sup> [parliament.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/s-347of2018.pdf](http://parliament.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/s-347of2018.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [shannontrust.org.uk/impact](http://shannontrust.org.uk/impact)

The infographic (below) illustrates some of the key groups targeted by libraries' universal service according to the Libraries Deliver report 2016. This approach links to number of Westminster's existing strategies such as the Active Westminster Strategy and the council's emerging Cultural Vision.



**2.13 /** The Board saw for itself that Westminster's Church Street library is a focal point of its community as a cultural hub, information centre and meeting point. It is also a bringer of investment both directly (with National lottery and Arts Council funding) and through people being attracted to visit and spend money in Church Street's shops and businesses. A good library can help a community feel more confident – such as the examples we heard about including the Avonmore library in Hammersmith and Fulham, which runs in partnership between the council and Citizens' Advice, and in Lewisham, where volunteers play a big part in service delivery and development.

One of the Board members had recently visited Aarhus, Denmark, where a new library forms the focal point of the city's approach to citizenship and new arrivals. Birth registrations take place in the library, and a bell is rung each time a new birth is registered there. In Suffolk, the library service is now a community business, run by a mix of employees who own a notional share and community representatives on a trust: use and funding from other sources beyond the council has grown significantly since this started.

**2.14 /** Integrating libraries to the delivery of a wider range of goals with other public services is likely require restructuring budgets and possibly redirecting some spend (either way). It is also likely to require exploration of other funding options that will meet strategic priorities. We recommend that this is explored and reviewed, as part of budget-planning processes over the next year, and findings implemented in 2020/21 and 2021/22. See also the section on page 33 regarding financial reality.

**2.15 /** A key area for renewed focus is in the link between libraries and learning: we want the link between the two to be renewed and strengthened. This enhances the original purpose of libraries but also supports a revitalised 'offer' for adults in the City. Such an offer would include access to both informal and formal learning (including academic courses), career coaching, support for entrepreneurs (who may not necessarily

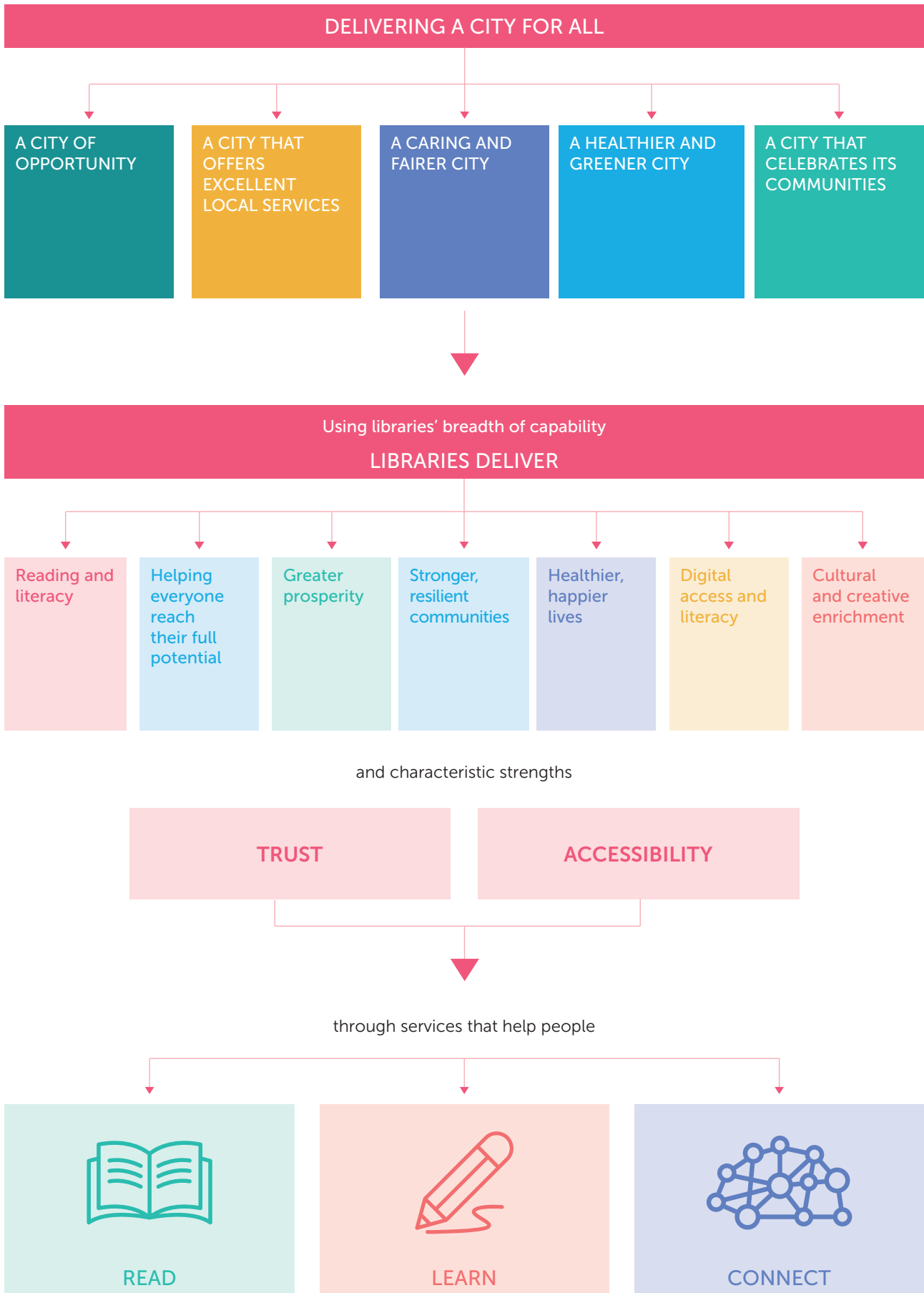
appreciate that they are entrepreneurs, and personal skills building. This will create opportunities in an accessible, safe and familiar environment – a good starting point for many people. We say a bit more about this in our first recommendation.

**2.16 /** All Council services make their contribution to the society we live in and how we care for and interact with that society. Libraries have a special opportunity to contribute. In the words of Malorie Blackman, author and past Children's Laureate, quoted in *Libraries Deliver*: ***"What do libraries do for us? Well, they introduce many into the world of literacy and learning and help to make it a lifelong habit; they equalize; they teach empathy and help us to learn about each other; they preserve our cultural heritage; they protect our right to know and to learn; they build communities; they strengthen and advance us as a nation; they empower us as individuals."***

### **2.17 / Creating a joined-up purpose**

Our recommendations have been developed with a view to utilising libraries' existing strengths to deliver or enhance the five distinct areas identified by Westminster in City for All. This does not mean the long-standing purpose of public libraries – reading and learning – is set aside. In fact, it is essential, because it is by using the library service's mission of Read, Learn, Connect as a starting point that Westminster's libraries draw people in and make these opportunities happen. The following recommendations, the Board believes, could help the Council gain even more value and benefit for people from the remarkable potential offered by libraries' position of trust and accessibility.







# WHAT THE BOARD RECOMMENDS

### 3.1 / The overall approach

- Do not be afraid to be bold
- Adopt (and adapt) the vision for public library services articulated in Libraries Deliver, and use it to support City for All
- Develop and empower staff and volunteers, for a confident workforce which advocates for itself and the service
- Be consultative and collaborative: learn from others and look to co-design and co-produce services with the local community, business, and other council services
- Maintain a recognisable core service throughout the City, tailored and delivered expertly in local settings and with flexibility to meet local need

#### The purposes of public libraries, agreed between central and local government, are:

- cultural and creative enrichment;
- increased reading and literacy;
- improved digital access and digital literacy;
- helping everyone achieve their full potential;
- healthier and happier lives;
- greater prosperity; and
- stronger, more resilient communities.

Source: Libraries Deliver, 2016

#### We also think the following are very important:

- Developing a plan without a vision will not be effective. Our recommendations should be seen as helping develop a vision rather than a delivery plan, which comes next
- Explore how libraries can be resourced and invested in for the future, to ensure the best outcomes

Apart from general recommendations and observations throughout the report we highlight five specific service delivery recommendations that link to City for All.

### 3.2 / How we have structured our recommendations

- There are five main recommendations
- Brief introduction to each
- Why and how for each recommendation
- Desired outcomes

A photograph of four women standing in a library aisle, each holding a certificate of achievement. The background shows bookshelves filled with books, with the word "Fiction" visible on the shelves. A large, semi-transparent blue number "4" is overlaid on the image, and the word "RECOMMENDATIONS" is written in white capital letters across the center of the number. The entire image has a blue tint.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## FIRST RECOMMENDATION: **LIBRARIES HELP MAKE WESTMINSTER A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

### **Refocusing resources and combining with other services to ensure libraries are a vital platform for delivery**

Westminster's libraries help everyone to *"have the opportunity to build and maintain their lives, careers and families"*, a priority of City for All. To do this, providing lifelong learning resources is essential. Accessible and trusted libraries provide resources, support and a "safe space" – particularly for those who need encouragement, help or support. This requires a clear tie-in with both adult education services and the Council's economic development work, to ensure seamless provision, best use of resources and, for the library service, a performance target to reflect the number of adults engaged and assisted and finding their lives enhanced. Some of these offerings may be "added value" or charged for at point of use, in addition to the core, free offer.

This recommendation has two strands – literacy and digital literacy; and greater prosperity.

### FIRST STRAND: **LITERACY AND DIGITAL LITERACY**

#### **WHY?**

Literacy improves life chances and is shown to have a positive impact on school achievement, employability, and health. The National Literacy Trust says: *"Lacking vital literacy skills holds a person back at every stage of their life."* Some parents find they can't support their own child's learning due to their own lack of literacy skills, lack of space and equipment particularly when children, as they grow up, have varying needs according to age. Low levels of literacy can also hamper social mobility.

In addition to this, the lack of basic skills has implications for isolation, social cohesion, and mental health. Libraries are an obvious place to start with the wealth of reading and digital materials and trusted staff to help people read, learn and find out more. Libraries are also places where people should be encouraged to come to learn new digital skills. The worldwide web and Google have made information so readily accessible and available to all that apparently there may be no need for libraries. However, there is still a substantial number of people who do not have ready access to digital services, for reasons of cost or accessibility. Others need help in researching, navigating and assessing the trustworthiness of information from often complex networks of resources. In the era of 'fake news', information literacy has never been so important and library staff help people develop this critical tool. Increasingly, public libraries are also partnering with technology companies and the academic sector to offer access for everyone to research reports and data, providing a valuable 'open source' for communities.

Digital literacy and digital inclusion should be strongly promoted as not only do they have huge benefits across learning, employment and leisure, they also align with the Council's own drive to connect with more people digitally.

#### **HOW?**

Expand the current reading and digital support programmes – independently and with partners particularly forging a new relationship with Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES). Engage more volunteers or secondees from business partnerships to work alongside library staff helping people become independent users of digital services.

Support a rolling programme of investment in IT to ensure that libraries update and provide a “world class” digital experience. The existing library offer we heard described by one of the staff as ‘2G’. Ideally, libraries should offer a superfast digital hub with modern infrastructure that can support the community in acquiring digital skills, giving people greater confidence and the ability to do homework, research and learning; to improve their health and wellbeing, job seeking, and their ability to engage with public services and e-commerce. It will also showcase the benefits of superfast, encouraging takeup, and this could potentially be a partnership with a major provider.

The service should, with the council’s IT provider, consider launching “*Westminster libraries in the cloud*” bringing together an improved digital offering, which would include digitising all its wonderful assets – not least more of the archive and reference library collections, so that more people can access them more easily.

## SECOND STRAND: **GREATER PROSPERITY**

### **WHY?**

Public libraries have always been a means to self-improvement and reskilling. They can support people into jobs and entrepreneurship through providing facilities for research, learning space, and resources, with a real focus on incubation and microbusinesses, and promotion of access to resources and knowledge in partnership with companies and individuals who can offer some of their time and skills each week.

### **HOW?**

#### **We recommend the library service should:**

- Develop a specific strategy to offer skills development, business and entrepreneurship support with a real focus on incubation and microbusinesses, and promotion of access to resources and knowledge such as the existing business information points. As we stated above (in Broad Yet Purposeful Focus), this should be done by renewing and revitalising the partnership with WAES, and working with the economic development team, and Westminster Employment Service
- Trigger business start-ups (particularly digital) by providing access to kit, connectivity and advice – a good example is the Makerspaces established by some libraries; we know this may be past being considered ‘innovative’ now but could be refreshed for the next generation
- Define a package of employment support to be delivered at each library as part of the core offer, including a range of basic support with job search, CV and application writing, and presentational skills. Specialist career advice should be made available within libraries to enhance this core offering
- Work with the economic development and commercial strategy teams in the council, build partnerships with large local employers which offer progressive career opportunities, to trial new forms of support. These would be delivered through library spaces, to assist low-income residents to progress in the workplace. For example, Google could be helped to identify and recruit a cohort of digital apprentices from low-income backgrounds, with support provided away from the workplace in libraries (coaching, tech skills, life skills, self-led learning, mentoring). This could parallel a scheme the City of London already has in place to improve in-work progression by young Black And Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees. Follow up with research to evaluate outcomes

### **We recommend the Council should:**

- Develop a comprehensive learning and skills “offer to adults” in Westminster with recognition for libraries as entry points to a high-quality learning experience

### **Proposed outcomes:**

- 50% of adults requiring literacy and digital skills improvement over the next five years are supported by libraries
- Learners gain recognised qualifications through participation in library programmes
- 10% of the City of Westminster’s target for people into jobs each year will have engaged with a programme in, or been supported by, libraries (75 people)

### **Case study**

**Glass Box** is a community space in Taunton Library to support digital and business innovation where start-ups, innovators and digital makers can come together to share knowledge and increase digital skills development. The library works in partnership with businesses, who can offer to share their skills and expertise. Workshops have included a Google Digital Garage masterclass, where experts from Google offered advice and tips to local business owners on growing their businesses.

### **Library facts:**

The British Library’s ‘**Enterprising Libraries**’ network has helped to create **1,692 new businesses** and **4,178 jobs** between 2013 and 2015 resulting in a payback of £4.50 for every £1 of public money spent. Of the people who started a new business, **47%** were women, **26%** were from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and **25%** were unemployed or had been made redundant.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Enterprising Libraries: Engines of innovation and economic growth (Key findings of an Economic Impact Analysis), British Library, March 2015

## SECOND RECOMMENDATION: LIBRARIES HELP SUPPORT A CITY THAT PROVIDES EXCELLENT LOCAL SERVICES

### Libraries provide a place and help make things happen

Libraries' intrinsic accessibility and trustworthiness can not only support improved services but also add value to the existing provision. We also think the commercial potential of libraries – some of it known, some of it still to be uncovered – should be maximised to help them be sustainable.

Westminster City Council has *"a national reputation for providing excellent local, value for money services"*. In deciding how to continue to drive efficiencies as well as improvement, the council should be mindful that libraries are able to offer locations across the City and trusted staff through which the community can access a wide range of services. This is a capability which can reduce pressure and levels of demand on other council services. Some examples of what we mean are noted below.

### WHY?

Libraries are in communities where often there are few other visible public and community spaces. They provide a readymade shop window and place for service providers and residents to interact. People feel more comfortable using a library in a way they don't with a council office, advice service or even, in some cases, health services. These levels of trust, combined with accessibility, are specific to libraries and can help the council achieve its strategic objectives and boost community resilience and independence.

There are efficiency gains in using libraries, in addition to or in place of other facilities and resources, in both using resources well, and outcomes. Currently, thousands of people attend library health and well-being events each year, supporting public health priorities including smoking cessation, healthier eating, and better mental health. Often these are low-level interventions, such as books on prescription, which helps people take ownership of a mental health issue, used before the need for more intensive therapies arise. This can save money downstream as lower cost interventions reducing or delaying the need for more expensive one-to-one therapies provides a saving for the NHS and may also be better for the patient.

### HOW?

#### We recommend the library service should:

- Make the business case for efficiency gains for other services, engaging corporate policy, public health and others to support developing the evidence base
- Develop its commercial strategy, more pro-actively seeking funding opportunities. We recommend this be done in a clear and strategic way aligned with financial planning and corporate commercial opportunities
- Prioritise fundraising and commercial activity as a given. Westminster's libraries have taken some first steps in this but should review this area, supported by the council's commercial team, and secure support for doing more. Learning from the experience of some of their teams (archives, music, for example) in leveraging funding successfully, and scaling this up



### **We recommend the Council should:**

- Carry out a full review across all council service portfolios, looking at where libraries could help deliver and communicate initiatives and help see them actioned. Build findings and resulting proposed actions directly into service development and financial planning
- Help the service become more adept at fundraising and commercial partnerships. It has already taken some steps to grow in these areas but they require skill and specialist knowledge, at a time when more public and voluntary services are chasing the same funding pots and opportunities. Set realistic targets but also engage the service with wider corporate fundraising and commercial activity

### **Proposed outcomes:**

- Libraries have a secure resource base enabling longer-term planning (five years or more)
- Commercial strategy introduces greater resilience for the service, protecting and complementing the core offer and enabling the introduction of financially viable service improvements and enhancements to spaces

#### **Case study:**

Chelmsley Wood library, Solihull

- The library includes co-location with a community advice hub and health hub in an urban neighbourhood
- Council-run
- Library service review (2017) future strategic direction emphasises more hubs and partnership working

#### **Library facts:**

Library users place a theoretical monetary value of £24 - £27 per visit on their library service, which is 5.5 - 7.5 times greater than the cost of provision.<sup>9</sup>

9 The Economic Impact of Libraries Report, Alliance of Libraries and Archives UK, 2014

## THIRD RECOMMENDATION: LIBRARIES BECOME A VISIBLE ADVOCATE OF A CARING AND FAIRER CITY

### Accessible spaces fostering community spirit

“City for All” says that *“caring for our most vulnerable...is and will always remain our most important priority.”* Libraries, as trusted and safe spaces, are somewhere the most vulnerable can have a place and a voice and participate in activities rather than feeling isolated.

### WHY?

Westminster should be a place where people look out for each other, fostering a sense of community, and where everyone has a chance. Libraries can help promote social inclusion and make people feel part of the city and welcomed. They are already places people go for help, for advice and to make contact. We want to see the council build on this by using libraries to make even more connections in our sometimes-fragmented urban life. Going back to first principles, and the legal basis for libraries, they should genuinely be “for all” – ages, backgrounds and communities – which helps build cohesion.

### HOW?

By using libraries to foster community spirit, connectedness and shared experiences, helping tackle loneliness among not just elderly people but also the isolation felt by new arrivals with a lack of English skills, carers, people with mental health problems, or parents at home with a very young child. There should be a fair deal for young people – many of whom use libraries for study, but are sometimes overlooked for other needs. The service can learn lessons from its colleagues in youth services and sport and leisure in its engagement.

Libraries should, as a given, be accessible – not just for mobility impaired people, but to all: people with dementia and their carers, homeless and vulnerably housed people, and those with mental health issues, as well as easy to use for parents and carers with buggies and prams. This may need investment, as some facilities currently do not meet these needs resulting in those people not being able to access services. Certainly, the Council should look for opportunities to reprovide or upgrade outmoded facilities, wherever this is possible, either through planned maintenance and development, or opportunities that arise to replace existing provision with new. This should form part of the library location strategy we suggest later in this report (see section 6.4). We are aware the Council has opportunities for two new libraries in Westminster to replace current, inadequate provision: these should be used as prototypes for an “inclusive from go” approach.

### We recommend the library service should:

- Support action to tackle the “loneliness epidemic” through a targeted, measurable programme in partnership with adult social care
- Ensure all libraries become dementia-friendly spaces as they are refurbished or provided, and more staff are encouraged to become Dementia Friends as part of the national ADS scheme
- Provide a consistent standard of service to homeless or vulnerably housed library users complementing the work of the council’s homelessness team to understand needs whilst managing any behavioural issues
- Develop an engagement strategy with young people – including non-users of libraries within a 16–30 age group – making them feel it’s “their library”

## We recommend the Council should:

- As a priority, address the accessibility and quality of the service provision – particularly its buildings, to ensure barriers to using libraries are reduced and removed. This includes both physical access, supportive technologies, staff training and awareness, and co-design of services with users
- Use the potential of the community infrastructure levy and section 106 resources in a strategic way to support these changes, with the engagement of local communities

## Proposed outcomes:

- All libraries to be fully and equitably accessible, with standards assessed and agreed with disability and community organisations, and percentage of registered users with a declared disability is aligned to City of Westminster resident proportion by 2025
- Westminster’s libraries are seen as a national benchmark for accessible service provision by peers and national organisations, by 2025

### Case study:

**Sandal Library** in Wakefield received a major internal and external refurbishment in 2015. The interior was redesigned so that people living with dementia would feel comfortable, supported and more independent. Planned in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Society, Sandal Library became the district’s first dementia friendly public building and is likely to be the first fully dementia friendly library building in the country.

Practical things include: a colour scheme which is deep red making it warm, friendly and calming; furniture which is suited to the people who will use it; a reduction of reflective surfaces; contrasting door frames making it easier for people to recognize them against the walls; and signage that is easy to understand. They have published details about these changes in a guide. Since reopening, it has become a beacon of good practice for other library services and health professionals. Its local community has also enthusiastically supported their new local library and it has become a vibrant hub of community life.

### Library facts:

**68%** of people feel isolated following a diagnosis of dementia, and **85%** want to stay at home as long as possible after a diagnosis. However, one study found that people with dementia regularly go out alone and this improves their health, wellbeing, and independence. Familiar places help people to find their way around, and data from the national Taking Part Survey 2016 (DCMS) indicates that over one-third of people aged 75+ already use their public library.<sup>10</sup>

10 Sources: “Over half of people fear dementia diagnosis, 62 percent think it means ‘life is over’ ” study; Dementia Awareness Week 15th-21st May 2016 from the Alzheimer’s Society, YouGov poll (June 2014) commissioned by Alzheimer’s Society, Mitchell, L. and E. Burton (2010) Designing dementia-friendly neighborhoods: helping people with dementia to get out and about.

## FOURTH RECOMMENDATION: **LIBRARIES HELP MAKE A HEALTHIER AND GREENER CITY**

### **Libraries are a key resource for social prescribing and referrals**

Social prescribing is a means of enabling GPs, health and social care professionals, the voluntary sector and other partners such as job centres and pharmacies, to refer people to a social prescribing advisor, who supports and refers patients to local services such as walking clubs, gardening or arts activities.

By providing non-medical support, it aims to improve patients' quality of life, health and wellbeing by recognising that health is affected by a range of social, economic and environmental factors, and by helping them take greater control over their own health. Evidence shows that this approach works: a UK study found that after three to four months, 80% of patients referred to a social prescribing scheme were paying fewer visits to A&E, outpatient appointments and inpatient admissions.<sup>11</sup>

Dr Neil Churchill, NHS England's director for experience, participation and equalities, said: *"Readers have always believed in the benefits of reading but initiatives like these show how important libraries can be to our health and wellbeing, especially for people feeling lonely or isolated and living with poor health. It's great to see the NHS partnering public libraries to make sure we can help more people find answers to their troubles and not just treat the symptoms."*<sup>12</sup>

To help Westminster be a healthier city, where people grow up, live and age well, libraries can contribute to people's understanding and engagement with their own health and well-being, as well as that of the community around them. More than anywhere else, in health, knowledge is power, and a more informed population is better able to make informed choices.

### **WHY?**

Fundamentally, libraries are about a broad-based and hugely effective form of social prescribing on a mass scale, substituting participation, learning and social contact for clinical treatments. It's for this reason that libraries are co-located with local health centres in Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Lambeth and many other areas. Kent Arts and Libraries demonstrated to the Board how their digital services communicate with the growing ageing population and help link up people with each other and services, remotely, to assist in providing reassurance and combating loneliness.

Public libraries already support better health and well-being for many people, helping them to become active, live better and maintain their mental health. Westminster's library and archive services are no exception. Health checks, smoking cessation groups, chair-based exercise for older people and reading for mental health activities take place every week, and libraries are a key place that people seek information and advice about health and well-being at a time and in an environment, which tends to make them comfortable and receptive to these messages.

### **HOW?**

As a free, local and accessible resource, delivered in a non-stigmatising environment, the service can play a role in overcoming some of the causes of health inequalities, including lack of information as well as deprivation, levels of formal education, and physical mobility. Libraries can also play a part in the emerging "tranquillity agenda", providing space for people to recharge and reflect in our vibrant, "always-on" culture. This could contribute further to the mental health benefits they can bring.

<sup>11</sup> The Reading Agency: Social prescribing and Reading Well in Shropshire libraries, 2.10.18

<sup>12</sup> NHS England: Social prescribing at the library, blog 12.10.18

### **We recommend the service should:**

- Continue the partnership with public health, building on the success of the health information officer, training for staff in Making Every Contact Count, and the 1,000 health activities in libraries every year. Update and develop the health offer in libraries
- Build the offer with local health professionals, particularly GPs, to ensure they know about what libraries in their locality can do. Remove any barriers to awareness and build this in as a key local target for each individual library
- Ensure new and redesigned library spaces have different zones wherever possible, allowing a range of social activity and also a quiet space for study and reflection. And also that new and refurbished libraries offer spaces for health and well-being activities such as meeting and events spaces, consulting rooms and digital resources and equipment, wherever feasible
- Focus on social isolation and loneliness reduction, by reforming the home library service to specifically address these issues as its most important priority
- Develop the rationale for libraries and public health building a partnership with UCL Partners, the academic health science network based at University College London Hospital (UCLH), to trial fresh approaches for effective community-based treatments for adult and adolescent depression, dementia and Alzheimer's disease. This would build on work such as Wakefield's dementia-friendly library, and the new approach to under-5 rhymetime sessions being developed by the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians, that focuses on better mental health outcomes.<sup>13</sup> It would also connect it to UCLH's world-leading research and higher standards of proof. This would see Westminster's libraries acting as city-labs and real-world settings for academics to conduct formal trials and studies, with potential benefits in practice for staff and volunteers, and better outcomes for service users
- Within the context of family hubs, look at how libraries could provide targeted 'pop-up' services to support the development and learning among families with young children. This could focus on school readiness through building literacy (rhyme and story times, engagement with reading) and parent information services – building on what libraries already do, but spreading it out wider in the community beyond the library walls

### **We recommend the council should:**

- Join the libraries and archives service up with the sport and leisure strategy, and ensure it is contributing to encouraging active, engaged and healthy lifestyles by providing encouragement, support, and awareness
- Consider how it can use libraries much more effectively as focal points to promote positive behaviours, including driving recycling, making more use of libraries' ability to reach into the community to affect behaviour change. Use libraries as an exemplar to shift towards reduce, reuse, share as well – making a highly visible commitment to having less 'disposable' culture in the City, taking all opportunities to use resources more sparingly
- Promote community gardening and planting wherever space permits

### **Proposed outcomes:**

- Outcomes and benefits of a social prescribing approach as applicable to libraries are measurable and demonstrable, with a suite of performance measures to be developed by 2020
- Increased library usage by people on referral from health providers
- Westminster's libraries partnering on innovative programmes with research organisations

<sup>13</sup> Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians: Rhymetime and seven quality principles, November 2017

### Case study:

Oswestry Library and North Mobile Library in Shropshire have been working in partnership with other community organisations on a social prescribing pilot scheme in the local area. When GPs identify patients who they feel would benefit from a health-promoting community intervention, they can direct them to Shropshire Council's health service, **Help2Change**, where a friendly and experienced advisor is available to talk to the client about resources and services available in the library to help.

According to Mirka Duxberry, Library Development Manager at Shropshire Libraries, chief among these resources are the **expert-endorsed Reading Well collections**:

*"The programme offers more than signposting and includes one to one support from a social prescribing advisor, trained in behavior change. The majority of clients have anxiety, depression and/or pain management issues. We have introduced them to our specialist Reading Well collection of books on these topics, activities for reducing stress/reducing isolation such as Time to Listen (books aloud for adults), and Quick Reads book club for people with low confidence and concentration."*

The scheme also has the full support of Shropshire Council's public health department, who has seen how working with Shropshire Libraries has helped to broaden their reach into communities and really *"make a difference by working with partners to make health and wellbeing information available to the public"*.

### Library facts:

Regular library users have an increased the likelihood of reporting good general health. The NHS estimates this delivers a saving across the library-using English population of £27.5 million annually.<sup>14</sup>

14 The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries (Full Report), 2015, Arts Council England

## FIFTH RECOMMENDATION: LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES SHOULD BE THE CITY'S FOCAL POINTS FOR CELEBRATING CITIZENSHIP, HERITAGE, AND COMMUNITY-BASED ART AND CULTURE

### The first place for people to experience and engage with arts, culture and heritage

Cultural and creative opportunities enrich lives. Previous Culture Secretary, Karen Bradley MP, said: *"Watercolour painting, playing a sport, visiting ancient and beautiful places, drawing, writing poetry, mastering a musical instrument – all of these lead to a life well lived. They raise the human condition and cheer our spirits. Simply put, they make us happy.... It is precisely the aggregate effect of these individual experiences that will bring about a healthier, smarter, more peaceable, more cohesive, and happier society."*<sup>15</sup>

The DCMS Taskforce says: *"Libraries are well-placed to increase participation in cultural activities because of their use by all social groups and their role as inclusive cultural hubs within communities. Libraries also point people to wider cultural activities, objects, knowledge and sites, and encourage individuals to explore different cultural experiences and to create things themselves."*

### WHY?

We believe the library service should foster and promote engagement with cultural and artistic activity for two reasons:

1. it is good for people – their well-being, and social integration; and
2. it improves educational achievement and encourages lifelong learning.

Libraries are a good place to start taking part, as an audience or participant: they are local, friendly and accessible.

Library buildings provide an important venue for a wide range of cultural events and activities. They often offer smaller scale artistic events and activities in a familiar and informal environment, which can give them a heightened ability, compared to other venues, to attract new audiences who may not habitually engage with the arts. This is increasingly being recognized by Arts Council England (ACE) and other creative policy-makers and partners. A good example is City of Stories, a writers' programme in public libraries (including Westminster's) aimed at identifying new and emerging talent. Libraries can be an accessible introduction to cultural experiences with minimal risk. For artists and the creative economy, they can give a platform for little financial outlay, and space to grow and develop. They are incubators of talent, and this aligns with the council's own emerging cultural strategy. For the Council, it would fit well with the City Lions programme and the wider challenge to engage local people with the benefits of living in Westminster, cheek by jowl with some of the world's best arts organisations.

### HOW?

The service, supported by the wider Council, should consider a strategic approach to building relationships, including with external funders, and also consider crowdfunding, sponsorship and higher profile marketing. The service already has a good entree to the cultural ecosystem of Westminster through the Westminster Culture Network, which it supports and facilitates. This is a grouping of arts professionals, teachers, council officers and others which networks

15 Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, maiden speech as secretary of state for digital, culture, media and sport; Liverpool – published 9.8.16

and collaborates regularly. The service should seek more opportunities to work with the major cultural, research, local, national and international business organizations that have their home in Westminster, and do so in a more targeted and strategic way. This may require a full time committed fundraising resource. Developing relationships may well have a beneficial effect in providing support for other library activities either financially or in kind.

**We recommend the library service should:**

- Continue to support and grow arts, cultural and heritage programming in libraries and archives, building on the excellence that already exists and ensuring that it is targeted widely and accessible
- Start to make use of digital channels with partners to improve engagement and take-up such as webcasting events and talks to broaden the audience
- Develop its strategic approach to fundraising and consider dedicated resource
- Set challenging targets for funding and attendance – leveraging money, increasing attendances, evaluating feedback

**We recommend the Council should:**

- Ensure libraries' role in promoting culture and creativity is fully recognised and reflected in its wider cultural strategies and programmes
- As well as the City cultural strategy, connect to other programmes and strategies e.g. sport and leisure, City Lions to maximise the benefits
- Consider a commissioning budget or programme led by libraries to develop new talent and offer opportunities targeted where the need is greatest
- Support and challenge the service to build more external relationships and bring in more resource through partnerships

**Outcomes:**

- Greater engagement with arts and culture within communities, via libraries; especially non-traditional and hard-to-reach audiences, to be measured via longitudinal study. Events in libraries are reported by participants to improve their connection to their community and sense of wellbeing
- Strengthened partnerships with major organisations fulfilling their social responsibilities to Westminster in part through libraries
- A more sustainable arts, culture and heritage offer



A photograph of a classroom scene. A teacher is standing in the center, playing an acoustic guitar. Several young children are sitting on the floor around her, watching. The room is decorated with colorful paper and has bookshelves in the background. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

# SOME ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

## 5.1 / A note on special collections and services

The City of Westminster's libraries and archives include a number of special collections and services that are unique or unusual, and not replicated in other public library services. These include the City of Westminster archives, the Westminster music library and a number of collections based at Westminster reference library. The collections mostly relate to arts, culture and heritage (see also Recommendation 5). With the exception of the City of London – which is a unique authority, and in any case, has a London-wide remit for some of its services – no other borough maintains such a large number of special collections in addition to the core service within its public library service. In part, this explains the high per capita cost of the library service in Westminster. Some of the collections are of regional or even national interest, and are used by non-residents from far and wide, whilst being maintained as part of the Westminster-funded service.

Archive services do more than just preserve records of municipal activity. They provide a written, visual and oral history of Westminster and its ever-developing communities. We should not forget every day is history in the making. Westminster has an archive of distinction, one of only two in London to be accredited by the National Archives,<sup>16</sup> which runs a sustainable programme of education, outreach and events, funded by mainly external resources and partnerships.

The music library, housed in Victoria library, is one of the largest of its kind in the country. Founded in 1946 thanks to the bequest of a major collection, and still supported financially by the charitable Central Music Library Committee which provides funds for new acquisitions, it includes a song index of more than 75,000 items, as well as orchestral and vocal sets for hire, and books about music. This is a significant collection, with no real equivalent in London, as most boroughs have discontinued their music libraries in recent years. As well as research resources, there are music practise facilities and keyboards for hire,

and a regular programme of talks, workshops and concerts aimed at opening up access to the collections and engaging with schools, and groups who may think it is not for them.

Westminster reference library is, in reality, a special collections library with resources focused on visual and performing arts (particularly West End theatre), business and science. It recently launched a telescope loan services funded by a research council grant, supported by a programme of events. Alongside the collections regular activities, talks and networking events attract hundreds of people each year, many of whom are not otherwise library users.

The Board is not going to comment in any detail on these services as their specialist nature would require more in-depth evaluation. We have not reviewed these services in their rightful national context. They appear to provide much-valued services (evidenced by use and recognition), but where they are positioned in the future requires a detailed study and meeting of minds nationally.

It may be that, given their wider regional and national remit, and the potential for greater external funding, a different vehicle should be considered in the form of a trust or other non-profit model, for these specialist services. Partnership with other institutions (particularly academic) might also be a way forward for some of the collections in particular – providing access was maintained and enhanced. The main aims would be to ensure continued vibrancy and sustainability for these services and collections, and the Board thinks this – and other options that may be identified – should be considered by the Council.

<sup>16</sup> The National Archives accredits local authority archive services which meet its standards for care, access and education. Westminster was first accredited in 2016

## 5.2 / Volunteering

Libraries should continue to nurture their connections with the local voluntary and community sector (VCS). Westminster libraries already work directly with many VCS organisations to deliver vital services to people in their neighbourhoods, sometimes by providing physical accommodation. Libraries should build upon this existing good work, using their reach into the community to raise the profile of local VCS activities and playing an active part in the promotion of volunteering and recruitment of volunteers.

Volunteers are already an important part of delivering library services in many parts of the country, not least in Westminster. They support and assist paid staff but their contribution goes beyond that. Volunteers help deliver services that are enhanced beyond what the council could offer alone. They are also a direct connection to the community, helping the service be 'owned' by it and providing an important feedback loop. The benefits are also mutual – opportunities to volunteer in libraries can support people's health and wellbeing, provide chances for personal and career development, and can tackle social isolation.

We think the Council should increase and diversify the number and deployment of volunteers in running its libraries, with more demanding targets for the number of hours and an overall number of people engaged in this way, and give more of a voice to volunteers, in terms of consultation and engagement. Targets should include a requirement for the volunteer body to reflect the socio-economic and cultural makeup of Westminster, and that volunteers should be part of the solution for developing new and sustainable services in libraries.

A woman wearing a beige hijab and a dark lace-patterned top is seated at a table covered with a white patterned cloth. She is focused on a task, using a red-handled tool to work on a piece of paper. The table is cluttered with various items, including newspapers, a blue folder, and art supplies like colored pencils. In the background, a red fire extinguisher is visible on the wall. The entire image has a blue tint and a large, semi-transparent white graphic element in the center.

# DELIVERING THE RECOMMENDATIONS: THE FINANCIAL REALITY

**6.1 /** Austerity in the public sector hasn't gone away. The Board fully appreciates that 'gold-plated' levels of funding are not likely in the future for discretionary services, as reduction in government grants and increasing demand for core social services continue. Libraries need to clearly and continuously demonstrate the value they add, and the approach of Libraries Deliver partially illustrates their value and beneficial outcomes.

**6.2 /** It is, however, worth noting that while local government as a whole spent less than 1% of its total budget on public libraries in 2014/15, here in City of Westminster the council spends rather more, about 3.5% of its revenue, on running the library service, a total of **£6 million a year**, as of 2018/19. It is clearly proud of its libraries and willing to invest in them (when others have cut theirs). Even so, financial pressures dictate that libraries will need to be more commercial and successful at attracting new funders and users if, in future, provision is to be maintained or even extended to meet a new and emerging need. They will also need to consider whether other models of delivery, in whole or part, might support sustainability.

### **6.3 / Alternative models of delivery**

The Board had presentations from organisations who are providing public library services in a variety of ways. These included Devon's Libraries Unlimited, a mutual provider which is owned by employees and the community; GLL, which is a form of social enterprise; and as previously mentioned, the partnership libraries in Lewisham, and in Hammersmith and Fulham. The different models, and the in-house delivery of service which Westminster (along with many other councils) continues to have, all have strengths and weaknesses. The implications and relative merits of individual models of delivery can be financial as well as operational. The Board noted how, whatever the model pursued by a local authority, the challenge of balancing budgetary imperatives and the pursuit of efficiencies with the core purpose and value of the services, remains. The Board has decided not to recommend one model over another, as it would require considerably more time and investigation than we have had available to make a sound recommendation.

What did become abundantly clear, though, in engaging with the different models presented is that the passion and commitment of the people delivering the service are vital. This is especially true for those responsible for leading it, from both a political and managerial standpoint. We recommend that Westminster City Council keep reviewing its means of delivery in a timely way to ensure that not only is it offering the best value and achieving objectives, but also that it is engendering passion and commitment to the service at all levels. An unflinching commitment to this, not the details of the precise model chosen, seemed to the Board to be the key common marker of success.

**6.4 /** An important part of a financial review should cover the use and appropriateness and location of library property and premises. The library buildings in the context of the council's wider property ownership should be reviewed by the Council's property services and library services together to ensure buildings are used to best effect, and what the need should be in the medium term future. This review should include co-location opportunities, sharing of resources, disposal to market of duplicate or under-utilised facilities, and reinvestment in library provision. It should also have a mind to community engagement. A good example is the plan to use space at Seymour Leisure Centre to provide a new library for the community in Marylebone. There could be further opportunities if other services such as adult learning work more closely with libraries in the future.

**6.5 /** The Board has not looked in-depth at where to locate libraries or how they should be planned. As we have noted, that would require a thorough business and needs appraisal, as well as identification of potential opportunities. There is the wider community of Westminster as well as local communities, and communities can be defined by geographical and other definitions. These need to be determined so that the council can respond appropriately. We do urge the council to include consideration of library provision in major redevelopments, of which the Church Street Masterplan is a good example.<sup>17</sup> This does not necessarily mean standalone library buildings.

<sup>17</sup> WCC: Church Street regeneration

Each evaluation should include the question “**what is the need**” with a clear bold response including “**what services should be on offer**” so the offer responds to the community. By way of illustration, it may be a review would demonstrate that fewer hubs, resourced effectively with excellent facilities planned to serve the community, and combined with other council services, would represent better service and value than the existing network built up piecemeal over the years. There are a number of examples of the close proximity of some libraries within Westminster, whilst other parts of the city are more remote from provision. Rightsizing this should be a long term ambition to ensure fairness and consistency.

In answering “**what is the need**” an appraisal study should include questions that respond in several ways. Is the current library of value as a centre of learning, as a cultural hub or facility, as a key resource for young people and their development, or for older members of the community; as a community builder, and as a community centre. They need not necessarily satisfy all these objectives but as has been said in section 2.9 of this report currently tailoring of services is not always by community need, but sometimes by what the legacy building can accommodate. This is clearly an ineffective way to continue in the future.

At the same time, locating services needs careful planning so people (especially existing users) are not deterred from using the service because of transport issues or fear of the unknown. On the other hand if the libraries estate contained the right number of well-sited, well-specified facilities, there is evidence to suggest that they might attract much greater use.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, any ill-effects of change – such as reluctance to travel, mobility concerns and other potential drawbacks could be offset by putting library resources in more community settings, including pop-up libraries as currently operated by London Borough of Merton, and more outreach and flexible provision with partners.

**6.6 / Westminster is at the heart of London, with strong local, national and international business presences, which offer support and partnering opportunities few other**

local authorities have available to them. Westminster libraries’ positioning at the heart of communities could make them very attractive for sponsorship or corporate social responsibility investment. Invest to save, community infrastructure levy and planning gain are just three alternative funding sources that libraries should build their case for investment from. Philanthropic support and Arts Council England funding is also available given the appropriate pitch for funds. The archive service, which is part of libraries in Westminster, has proved adept at securing funding from small grants and other parts of the public purse, and most of their project work is externally funded. Applying for funding requires, above all, knowledge and training, resource, stamina, skill, and passion for the cause.

### **6.7 / Commitment means more than money**

We have seen that passion and will to serve the community is crucial - more essential than throwing money at the subject, or indeed the reverse, presuming that major savings can or should be made. We were struck by how resourceful some service providers elsewhere have been when faced with potentially devastating financial cuts driving the need to think creatively and look for funding opportunities.

Equally though, the Board has seen how strong investment in library services, not necessarily funded in whole by councils, can deliver dividends for service scope and social outcomes well beyond those traditionally viewed as libraries’ and archives’ remit. The aim must be to courageously address the question of how to make Westminster libraries “**fit for the future**” and then support the service to find ways of resourcing the solution. This could include probably a mix of:

- Commercial sponsorship of some aspects of the service (other services have done this with their culture programmes, specific collections, children’s facilities – LEGO has supported these in some libraries, for instance); alternatively monetising some

<sup>18</sup> See for example the well-documented case of Tower Hamlets’ Idea Stores, where a declining library service reinvented itself with fewer, better-located and purpose-designed buildings combining library and adult learning provision in one place

non-core activity (an example would be charging admission for special events)

- Seeking long term funding from a key sponsor – public or private – for the specialist services that Westminster’s libraries offer but other councils do not. These include Westminster reference library (and its individual collections), the music library, the Chinese language service at Charing Cross Road library. One route would be to seek ‘**national portfolio England**’ status from the Arts Council, but this shouldn’t be the only opportunity that is explored since it is unlikely to be the answer to everything
- Commissioning by other council departments to deliver services making use of existing library strengths and skills. The service is already commissioned by public health to deliver health information and lifestyle guidance; by economic development to co-produce business information points, and by the West London Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver English For Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for Health classes. We recommend more commissioning opportunities are sought
- Greater commercial activity in libraries, delivered by the service but also through partnerships, franchising or sub-contracting

Health, social care and children’s services are the Council’s highest priorities and we hope we have made a case in this report for libraries to be part of the solution to many of the challenges faced by the Council: supporting health, learning and social care programmes, and building on the accessibility and trustworthiness we have talked about. Reducing the service’s funding without consideration of the alternatives – and the value it adds – would be counterproductive to the welfare of the community they are there to serve. Conversely, by giving all opportunities full consideration, we think that the realistic scope for world-class service, with long term financial sustainability, remains.



# CONCLUSION



We have presented our views and recommendation but how are we best able to judge the benefit of implementing the recommendations over time? We are all aware of the ever-rising expectations of customers and at the same time, the pressure on public funding requires greater diligence on measuring performance. Understanding the impact of what libraries do (the services, support, and space) both to individuals and to the community, is essential for us to understand and demonstrate its value.

Assessment of value for money of library services is often expressed only in economic terms. There are thorough business plans and targets for income and expenditure, there is a measurement of inputs including the cost of staff, stock, IT and premises. There are bold headlines of cost per visit, number of active members, or visits to the website, number of activities, books loaned. But importantly rarely is there any assessment of outcomes.

For example, what improved opportunities have been generated by increased literacy, or for reskilled midlife users? Has the use of a library led to higher academic grades or a better job? We certainly witnessed after school homework being diligently undertaken on one visit to Pimlico library, but library services must go beyond anecdotal indications, to ensure that where these connections feel instinctively true we can also prove that they are.

Continuous assessment of outcomes is crucial but is not the responsibility of the library service alone. It is for the council to acknowledge and find ways to measure the difference being made, and for the wider community to recognise the value of libraries and the services offered within them.

For the recommendations in this report to have the beneficial effect, we urge the Council to embrace the real opportunities available to widen library services for the good of the community and together collaborating with other services the values embraced in "City for All" will continue to achieve their goal.

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# CONNECTING LIBRARIES

A summary of the independent report on the future of Westminster's libraries

## Background

In 2017 Westminster City Council established a Libraries Advisory Board to look at the future of libraries in Westminster given the way libraries are used is changing and in light of local government funding reductions.

The Board carried out visits, extensive research and workshops with a range of people with an interest in the future of Westminster's libraries. We also looked at international, national and local issues and have made a number of recommendations for the council to explore.

## Libraries in context – what the Board looked at...

### THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR LIBRARIES, LIBRARIES DELIVER

The strategy looked at:

- How we tap into the full potential of libraries
- Potential to impact on vast array of beneficial outcomes
- Empowering and investing in library services
- Gaining recognition for the contribution libraries make
- Achieving and demonstrating value for money

### THE UNIQUE WESTMINSTER CONTEXT

- A city within a city, with a global outlook
- Well-funded and well-used library services
- Step change needed to make sure libraries fulfil their potential and meet the needs of the communities they serve

### HOW LIBRARIES ARE USED IS CHANGING

- Public libraries have evolved dramatically since inception
- Changes in how we produce and consume information
- Changes in society and changing needs within the community
- Growth and diversification of libraries' offer and the role of libraries staff
- Making best use of digital and new technologies
- Going beyond statutory obligations to meet local needs

### INTEGRATING LIBRARIES

- Connecting with other service departments and wider partners
- A clear and joined up purpose which others can buy into
- Explore funding options to focus on strategic priorities
- Be bold and think innovatively about the role libraries can have
- Using libraries' unique strengths to reach into the community and encourage access to services



## Summary of our recommendations to Westminster City Council

### City for All objective

1

**LIBRARIES HELP MAKE WESTMINSTER A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

#### Recommendation

#### Potential options for Westminster City Council to explore

First strand: *literacy and digital literacy*

- Expand reading and digital support programmes, forging new relationship with Westminster Adult Education Service
- Rolling programme of investment in I|T – libraries should offer a superfast digital hub
- Consider launching “Westminster libraries in the cloud” including more online archive and reference collections

Second strand: *greater prosperity*

- Specific strategy for skills development, business and entrepreneurship
- Help business start-ups by providing kit, connectivity and advice
- Define a package of employment support
- Build relationships with economic development partners and work together to trial new forms of support

2

**LIBRARIES HELP SUPPORT A CITY THAT PROVIDES EXCELLENT LOCAL SERVICES**

*Libraries provide a place and help make things happen*

- Make the business case for efficiency gains for other services
- Develop libraries’ commercial strategy, proactively seeking funding – the council should help the service become more adept at this
- Prioritise fundraising and commercial activity as a given
- Conduct full review across council services looking at where libraries can help deliver their outcomes

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3

**LIBRARIES BECOME A VISIBLE ADVOCATE OF A CARING AND FAIRER CITY**

*Accessible spaces fostering community spirit*

- Support action to tackle the ‘loneliness epidemic’ in partnership with Adult Social Care
- All libraries becomes dementia friendly places
- Provide consistent standard of service to homeless or vulnerably housed library users
- Develop an engagement strategy with young people, including non library users
- Address accessibility issues especially in relation to library buildings
- Use the potential of funds like the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 to support these changes

4

**LIBRARIES HELP MAKE A HEALTHIER AND GREENER CITY**

*Libraries are a key resource for social prescribing and referrals*

- Continue to partner with Public Health on Making Every Contact Count, and other health initiatives
- Build the offer with local health professionals, including GPs
- Ensure new and redesigned libraries have ‘zones’ for different activities wherever possible
- Reform the home library services to reduce social isolation
- Develop the rationale for a partnership with UCL partners
- Explore options for targeted ‘pop-up’ services for children and families
- Join up with the council’s sport and leisure strategy
- Look at how libraries can be focal points to drive positive behaviour change
- Promote community gardening wherever space permits

5

**LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES SHOULD BE FOCAL POINTS FOR CELEBRATING CITIZENSHIP, HERITAGE AND COMMUNITY-BASED ART AND CULTURE**

*The first place for people to experience and engage with arts, culture and heritage*

- Continue to support and grow art, culture and heritage programming in libraries and archives
- Make use of digital channels with partners to improve engagement
- Develop strategic approach to fundraising and consider dedicated resource
- Set challenging targets for funding and attendance
- Recognise libraries’ role in promoting culture and creativity
- Consider and dedicated budget or programme led by libraries to develop new creative talent

# CONNECTING LIBRARIES

The report of the independent advisory board on libraries to Westminster City Council  
**APPENDIX 2: Precis of Board Sessions**

Following its initial introductory meetings, the Board convened monthly to take forward a structured work programme, exploring one thematic topic each month. At each session the board heard presentations from experts and partners, debated key issues and identified further points for consideration within each field or aspect relevant to developing a vision for the future of Westminster’s libraries and archives. The sessions were scheduled as follows:

Date	Theme Covered
October 2017	Key Issues and Some Examples of Innovation
November 2017	Effective Use of Digital
January 2018	Identity and Impact of Libraries
February 2018	The Westminster Perspective (integration with other services)
March 2018	Delivery Models
April 2018	Culture, Heritage and Cohesion
May 2018	Closed plenary session – review of findings

The following is a precis of the subject matter, substance and findings emerging from each of those thematic sessions.

This information has been used to form the foundations and backbone of the Board’s final report and recommendations. Following publication of the report, many of the issues identified for consideration could also underpin further work by the council on developing its strategy for Westminster’s libraries and archives.

# THEME

# 1

**KEY ISSUES AND SOME EXAMPLES OF INNOVATION**  
(10 OCTOBER 2017)

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Nick Poole, Chartered Institute of Library and Informational Professionals
- Antonio Rizzo, Head of Library Services, London Borough of Lewisham
  - Phil Storey, Citizens Advice Hammersmith and Fulham
  - Sylvia Xuhua Zhan, Friends of Charing Cross Library

## KEYS POINTS NOTED

### Reflecting and Responding to Needs

- **Libraries should be adaptable** – to respond to what the community wants them to be, and to be able to evolve with those changing needs and preferences over time.
- **Three features underpin the relationship a successful library can have with the community:**
  - » Empowerment – empowering people to be engaged and active in the ‘life’ of their library
  - » Universality – they belong to citizens and offer equality of access
  - » Foundational – people trust the ethics of libraries and see that they rest on important principles

### New Ways of Delivering Libraries – Lewisham

- **Community libraries** – Lewisham developed new ways of working by creating community libraries. The service is part of a consortium of 18.
- **Using the building as an asset** – an enabler for local people to develop their presence and aims. Community groups can use libraries to these ends, bringing people together and further civic involvement and providing a focal point where the community can take action on things that matter to them locally.
- **Strong element of self-service** – so the libraries are open for longer hours with a security guard on site. Increased usage by users as a result.

### Working With Volunteers

- **Different examples of volunteer involvement** – In 2011 Citizens Advice Hammersmith and Fulham volunteered to run a library which had closed. In May 2012 Avonmore library opened as a self-service library, run by 30 trained volunteers on a rota basis.
- **Benefits to volunteers** – volunteers developed skills in customer service which enabled them to return to employment.

- **Benefits to the community** – the library offers a mixed service for the local community.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Libraries as a Community Space

People value the library as a trusted space where they feel safe and can use the services and feel connected to a trusted civic space. Arguably other public spaces like theatres are competing with libraries and encouraging people to use them as community spaces, although perhaps libraries interact differently as a public space and there are opportunities to build on what can be provided.

### The link to health

There is a strong link between libraries and health. How can the NHS play a role in what libraries do? Are there good examples of this from elsewhere? Role of digital in this – Avonmore have used digital solutions to deliver health guidance and advice. This can connect with digital inclusion – engaging older people, and intergenerational work. Meanwhile Lewisham libraries work closely with adult social care and public health. Also, they hold day time lectures by health professionals on specific topics which are filmed and uploaded to the libraries blog and Facebook page as a resource.

### Engaging the community

Importance of considering how young people can be engaged, reaching out to those from different backgrounds and overcoming language barriers. In reference to Charing Cross library that the Chinese community feel they have a place which is theirs, which is important. It was asked if initiatives like digital training for older people can apply to those who may not all be English speakers.

### Role of volunteers

Need to explore if volunteers are being used to replace paid staff because of spending cuts and think about how their skills can be specifically used to benefit library users. There are clearly considerations here for what the future of library staff is and what implications there could be for partners. Also need to think about the balance between library staff and buildings – this is to be explored further at a future meeting.



# THEME

# 2

**EFFECTIVE USE OF DIGITAL**  
(29 NOVEMBER 2017)

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Sarah Bottle & Lindsay Prestige – Kent Arts and Libraries: Touch A New World project
  - David Fletcher – Wimbletech CIC: The Workary
- Robert Hall, Director of Library Services – King's College London

## KEYS POINTS NOTED

### Digital Inclusion and the Older Community

- **Libraries need to cater to a rapidly ageing population** – in Westminster we can expect an increase of over 30% in over 65s within 10 years, with the largest increases being among people aged 80-84 and 90+. Digital projects can complement other services for older people, e.g. books on prescription, drop in one stop shops, and home library service etc. The 'Touch A New World' project consists of eight weekly hour long sessions with a dedicated volunteer who provides training and support for older people to learn to use digital technology. Project started in 2012, originally for existing home library service customers but now expanding to widen access (including lending tablet/device or those that don't own one).
- **Wide range of benefits** – increased confidence, greater use of digital tech, decreased social isolation through things like playing online games with others, more independence and easier to keep in touch, especially for the housebound. Projects like this feed into local and national outcomes including supporting to live independently, better care/wellbeing at home, increasing literacy, engagement, helping all reach potential and equality of access.

### Providing Space / Digital Support for Local Enterprise

- **Sharing space to maximise utilisation** – businesses, individuals and local service providers. This is important especially in London where rentable work space can be unaffordable for many. 'The Workary' started with one space in Wimbledon library, then expanded more widely in local area. Subsequently came to look at three sites in K&C – all now operational and full. Now, several further sites using various types of under-utilised space (mainly but not exclusively in libraries) in different parts of the country.
- **Enables peer support** – businesses and start-ups can all help and support each other as well as community benefit as the entrepreneurs bring their own interests,

expertise, passions and can do talks, activities etc for the local community. Draws people into libraries where additional services/opportunities can be promoted to them.

- **Keeps things local and affordable** – space at a below market rate and investment feeds directly back into local community. Also limits travel across London etc (other benefits in terms of cost, congestion, air quality).
- **Can be virtual** – if physical space doesn't exist or isn't readily available, can still reap benefits just by connecting business owners.
- **Must be done with staff** – crucial to collaborate really closely with library staff. A big part of why this works is it is a true joint venture between library and the local business community.

### Use of Digital in Academic Libraries

- **Significant moves towards greater use of digital in academic libraries** – at King's in particular, including online cataloguing, WiFi throughout the buildings and smart devices. Ambitious '2025 vision' for King's libraries will take this further. Much more self-service for finding, borrowing and returning items. Shifting staff time/resource to higher value activities. New focus on enquiries – more in depth enquiries possible as simplest things taken care of.
- **Flexibility** – more flexible opening hours are possible as need fewer staff doing transactional services. OCLC, their remote enquiry service (by which people can contact an actual librarian in the states), enables enquiry response out of hours. Remote provision (in or outside the country) also avoids London wages. Allows them to respond to pressures on physical space too, through shift to e-books, journals online etc.
- **Widening range** – collaboration with other libraries enables the University to maintain access to wide range of items without relying on physical space. Through digital provision can be possible to actually offer a better collection than before, with more immediate access as several people can sometimes use a single resource at once.

- **Patron Driven Acquisition** – letting service users' activities drive what materials/items the library buys for its collections. In some cases, if a threshold number of people download something the system automatically purchases it. Means collection remains relevant, genuinely reflects demand and hits the mark of what people want. Reduces waste and empowers service users.
- **Online learning environments** – courses and materials available online, plus Lecture Capture is a system whereby filmed lectures can be downloaded and watched later, for revision purposes etc. Slight decrease in people attending physical lectures but not major impact as you might have expected.
- **Data storage** – research is a very large part of what the university does and providing sufficient online data storage on such a huge scale can be a challenge.
- **The future** – looking at how they can respond further to pressures on space. Also recognising challenges around staff perceptions and focusing on ensuring buy in.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Using frontline staff

Potential to use public facing council staff, whatever their core role, as 'ways in' to services. Kent noted that greatest connection with new participants is made when local library staff promote their scheme. Looking to capitalise/expand on this by linking in with council local wardens. Westminster has large team of local wardens - they can be very aware of older vulnerable people in their areas and can be a trusted connection to the council. How could we take advantage of this to deliver future library services (around digital inclusion or more broadly)?

### Funding sources

Kent were able to take advantage of Arts Council funding for their Digital Dens project. What opportunities for accessing external funding might be open to Westminster's library service?

### WiFi coverage

Public ('on street') WiFi coverage in Westminster very variable – can be difficult to negotiate improvements to this with network providers. Could schemes like this for older, vulnerable people provide a strong argument on those discussions (with BT)?

### A hub at the heart of the community

Rental of business space is an established industry but this is a more personal and more community focused way of providing the same sort of service. It engenders strong sense of local ownership and buy in. Could using our own space in this way help place libraries at the heart of local communities? Are there other ways we could repurpose physical space which might achieve the same thing?

### Filling an existing gap

The Workary provides business space at a lower rent for those that can't afford market prices, and the resulting demographic is very local, tend to be older and more diverse than traditional start up spaces/innovation hubs. There is a niche and a need for this service locally, which libraries have an opportunity to fill by being innovative. How might this concept apply to library services (business/start-up/entrepreneurship support, and more broadly)?

### Use of space

How we use and allocate building space is a big question for the future of libraries. Digital solutions can help free up physical space (fewer physical books/other items, more online). Our use of space could become more 'mixed'. What might this mean for the traditional 'identity' of libraries? What are the risks / opportunities of diversifying?

### **Wider building use policies**

The way the council uses its property portfolio is a wider, and often controversial issue. Voluntary & Community Sector partners (charities) frequently need offices and space to provide their services – they experience many of the same problems in terms of prohibitive cost of rental space on the open market. The council provides a fair amount of space for VCS organisations, often heavily subsidised but this is still cost to the public - the policy on this needs work and will be looked at closely. Any use of library space should be seen in this context. Are there any potential implications for accommodating charities or other community organisations with a Workary-type model?

### **Complementing not replacing**

King's use digital solutions to enhance their offer, providing alternatives and flexibility (e.g. around opening hours) but not to entirely replace existing services. Must recognise people still sometimes want a traditional library space as an environment conducive to learning. They are not stopping buying books, but buying e-books as well – it's a blend.

### **Using digital to tailor services**

Digital offers opportunities to use data about usage to drive what we offer and better target services. Some think increased use of digital means fewer people will use the physical service, but King's found people physically accessing the library buildings has increased year on year alongside greater use of digital. How might we use digital to engage people in the services that ultimately bring them into greater not lesser contact with libraries, and the wider council?

### **More choice, less space?**

King's noted a very small percentage of the physical books are actually in regular circulation – this is likely true for us too. It can be possible to slim down how we store things while not making items inaccessible – it's about good mechanisms for retrieval - people can still get what they need without same dependency on costly central London floor space. How could we do this? Collaboration with other libraries? Scope for shared collections and reduced duplication?

# THEME AT A GLANCE

## DIGITAL

### DIGITAL RESOURCES VS. PHYSICAL MATERIALS

- Perceived threat to traditional purpose of libraries?
- Risks of digital only – alienation / division
- Opportunities for info sharing / 'collective' collections across multiple libraries?
- Decreased reliance on physical space – opportunities to repurpose library buildings?
- More specialised / personalised offer greater range and more niche items can be made available

### DIGITAL LITERACY

- Role of libraries in supporting digital literacy (training etc)?
- Priority target groups (e.g. older people)?
- Integrations with other services e.g. employment support, adult education?
- Children / young people – coding clubs etc?

### STAFFING IMPACT

- Freeing up staff from routine tasks?
- Implications for customer service element of the role?
- Training, cultural shift and adjusting to new ways of doing things – time and other implications?

### SUPPORTING ENTERPRISE

- Provision of physical workspace and or wifi?
- Challenges to traditional role of public library?
- Impact in local economy, generating jobs. Connection with cultural strategy – creative industries?

### ENGAGING PEOPLE

- Harder to reach groups – less mobile, language barriers, social isolation?
- Young people, preferred media for engaging with public services?
- Impact on nature / style of service delivery – quick, easy, open 24/7 .. but also transactional, less specialised, impersonal?

# THEME

# 3

**IDENTITY AND IMPACT OF LIBRARIES**  
(16 JANUARY 2018)

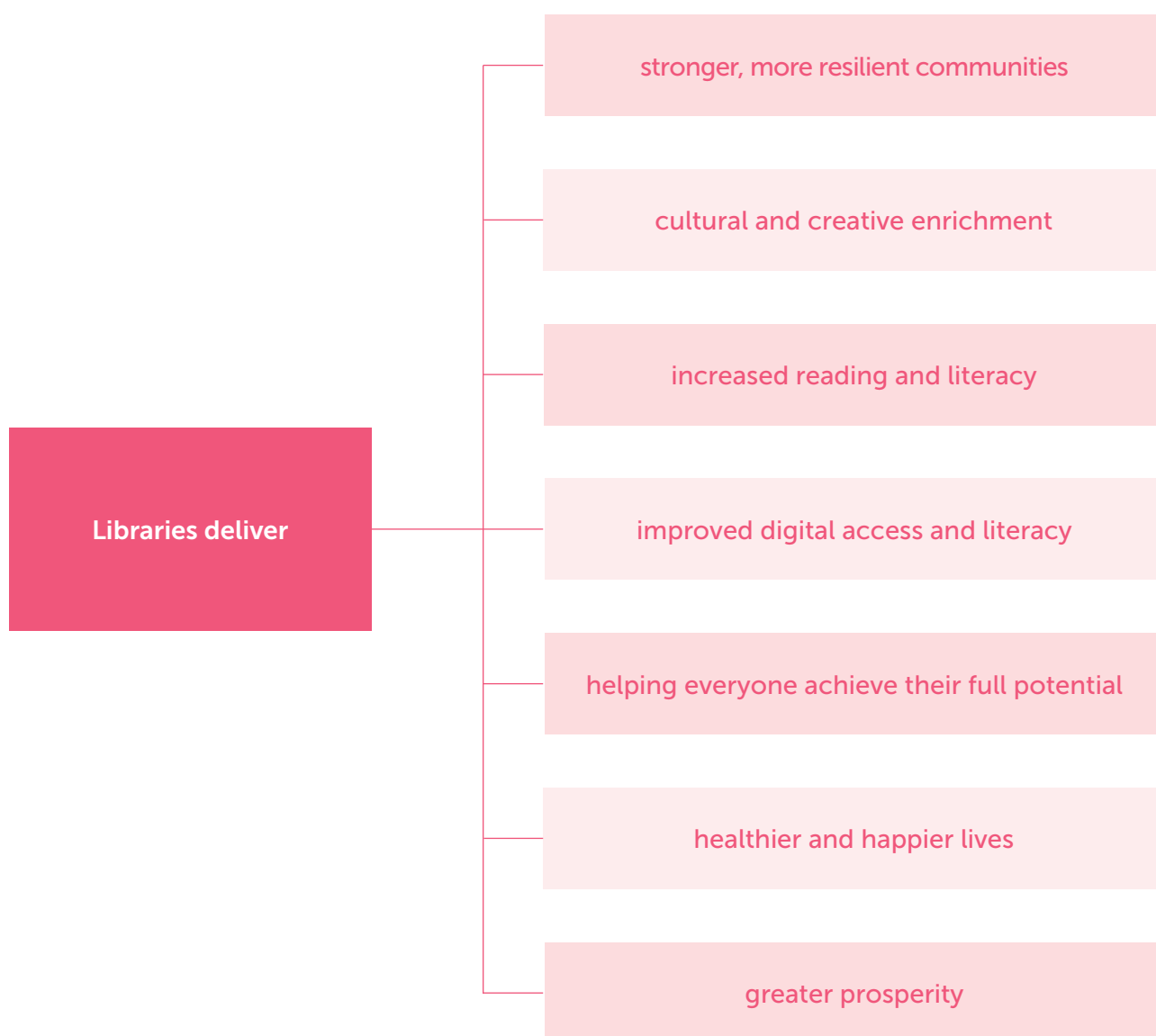
## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Kathy Settle – National Libraries Taskforce
- Neil McInnes – Society of Chief Librarians and Manchester Libraries

## KEY POINTS NOTED

### The Work and Findings of the Libraries Taskforce

- **The Libraries Taskforce** – this group took forward the recommendations of the Independent Library Report for England ([gov.uk/government/publications/independent-library-report-for-england](http://gov.uk/government/publications/independent-library-report-for-england)) published in December 2014. The Taskforce is commissioned jointly by The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) with the Local Government Association (LGA) and works with a wide range of other agencies and partners involved in the delivery of public libraries. Its mission is to “reinvigorate public libraries for the 21st century.” It looked at the issues and implications relating to public libraries in a very broad sense.
- **The taskforce’s findings** – the publication resulting from the Taskforce’s work is ‘Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021’. This was the first time that across the sector, central government and local government and others had put down in writing what we might collectively be aiming to achieve with public libraries.
- **Articulating the breadth of libraries’ offer** – ‘Libraries Deliver’ emphasises the broad ranging impact of libraries and the role they can have in society as a driver of improved outcomes in many areas of people’s lives. This idea is summarised in the document as follows:



- **Strategic focus** – Libraries Deliver discusses the need for strategic thinking, to connect and integrate libraries with a wide range of other public services, but also the scope for geographic nuance to ensure the specific local needs of any given area are met.
- **With and for the community** – there is also a strong emphasis on engaging and involving the local community, enabling them to have a hand in shaping their own local library services.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Promoting what libraries do / can do.

Libraries (and libraries staff) have tended not to shout about what they deliver and the impact of what they do. This means the power of libraries to drive outcomes and improve the lives of individuals and communities may have been underestimated in the past. High profile events like the London Library Festival can really help but more is needed. Where are the areas of government policy where libraries can demonstrate greatest (established or potential) impact? How can we more actively promote / achieve recognition?

### Importance of evidence

Demonstrating breadth and depth of impact libraries have with tangible evidence. Hard facts - ideally we would like to show what the financial effect of libraries is for public services as a whole. The costs that libraries save, for the council and for others.

### 'Weaving libraries in'

This applies at both a central government and a council departmental level – there can be a tendency to view libraries as a standalone service which supports various outcomes, but nonetheless operates as an entity apart. We should look to stitch what libraries offer into the fabric of other departments' plans and strategies. This better reflects their true contribution to shared outcomes and helps with obtaining buy-in.

### Unique service environment

Public libraries have a particular reputation and image as non-judgmental, non-stigmatising spaces where service users can feel comfortable. There is a different, less

formal and more trusting relationship with service users than can be achieved by some other services, and a sense of continuity that comes from accessing library services at various points through life. Also, service users are receptive. Linked to the above, people come to libraries voluntarily and feel they get something out of it – not a 'grudge transaction'. There is a high degree of trust and an equally high degree of accessibility of library services - this is significant in relation to an informed public in an era of "fake news." We must consider how we make best use of all this.

### Changing role of libraries

Increasingly libraries are functioning as hubs at centre of neighbourhoods and communities. As part of this we now often co-location with a wide range of other services. Examples include the Hive in Worcester; in other places they combine space with museums, post offices and other services. Commuter hubs and enterprise space are also on the rise. We can and should think creatively about potential options, especially with all services experiencing financial constraints and under pressure to maximise use of resources.

### First impressions count

Everything from physical layout (e.g. what service you see first when you come through the door), to the way staff are trained and how they present themselves, can impact on the perceptions of people walking into a public library. How could Westminster be creative in the way it blends different aspects of the service offer? Can services be staggered or 'pop-up' in sequence through the day or week? How can we use space flexibly and ensure our square footage works hard for us?



# THEME AT A GLANCE

## IDENTITY AND IMPACT OF LIBRARIES

### DEVELOPING AND DIVERSIFYING

- Oposing views and potential tensions – traditional libraries Vs fitness for 21st century and maintaining relevance?
- Perceptions of elitism Vs accessibility for all?
- Is there a core libraries offer? If so what does it include and should it be expected at every site?
- Public perceptions, political views and staff attitudes – any identifiable differences, similarities, themes, trends?
- Shifts that have already taken place – what's the trajectory?
- Risks and notes of caution?
- Existing 'Read Learn Connect' vision – does this still capture it for us?

### A UNIQUE SERVICE ENVIRONMENT

- Open, non-stigmatising, trusted – how to maintain this?
- People attend voluntarily and perceive interaction positively – how to use but not abuse this?
- Distinct from other council / public services buildings – how, and why is this beneficial?
- What type of services does this make library buildings suited to?
- Benefits of many services in one place ('incidental' engagement – i.e. engagement that may not have happened otherwise, which may open up access to beneficial services other than other one initially sought)?
- Key risks to all this, and major opportunities?

### DIGITAL LITERACY

- Increased expectations around digital?
- Libraries as an 'equalizer' – increasing opportunity, promoting learning and self-enrichment?
- Risk of over diversification, losing the essence of libraries?
- People value libraries but what do they value them for? Do we know / how could we find out?

# THEME

# 4

**THE WESTMINSTER PERSPECTIVE: INTEGRATION WITH  
OTHER SERVICES (20 FEBRUARY 2018)**

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Representatives of Westminster City Council service departments

## KEY POINTS NOTED

- **Breadth of contribution** – looking at the contribution libraries make to delivery of different services of the council and in so doing support the community in a range of ways and help to achieve a large number of WCC’s strategic outcomes. Hearing directly from service leads, focusing on:
  - » How libraries work with them already, helping to deliver services and drive outcomes
  - » What those services see as current strengths and weaknesses – what works well and where are the challenges?
  - » Executive Director’s’ general perceptions of libraries’ current role and how that role could be defined and developed further in the future to deliver mutual benefits and further shared aims
- **Adult Social Care** – two key priorities: to support and maintain independence and integration with health prevention and care coordination. ASC works with people to support their independence and libraries ought to play a key role in that. It is clear several schemes have been developed in the past, but more can be done working with GPs and others in the community supporting people to find what resources are in the community.
- **Public Health** – libraries have a place as a community asset. They are a trusted environment and are a ‘life course’ service (what used to be referred to as cradle to grave). There are opportunities to engage children within their first 1000 days and give them a good start in life as reading can have a massive impact and libraries can contribute. Particularly around addressing inequalities by encouraging reading and improving older people’s IT skills can produce a positive outcome. Public Health currently funds a health information coordinator who run health events in libraries, including Make Every Contact Count (MECC) and that can be built on.

There are opportunities to think about the library space and knowing what works. Challenging who we are and helping to address that has huge potential.

Co-location is an opportunity to use other community assets like church halls, places of entertainment, and community and sports centres which can also be used. Libraries are seen as a trusted environment where people feel comfortable, and this is a key asset to build on.

- **Children’s Services** – past relationship with libraries has included children’s centre outreach workers going into libraries to deliver music activities and parenting groups. Other organisations like charities may now be providing this service. The preventative agenda is key. Libraries can build relationships with third sector partners, making them a venue where multiple events can take place and have a role to play in enabling community groups to come together. Reading is fundamental – how can we encourage more use of libraries, particularly by non-English speakers? Resources and skills in community languages (books and speakers) would be important in this.

Also consideration should be given to how to engage extended families. The Chair asked about local need and differing demographics. Madhu replied that the local authority cannot provide everything and partnerships are essential.

- **City Management and Communities** – three key areas: service delivery, communication/marketing and co-location. Libraries are part of the City Management and Communities directorate in Westminster, alongside a range of other public-facing and customer services such as parks, sport and leisure, cleansing and public protection. They have always been a way to extend the reach of other council and public services. Currently, they are used to engage non-users in physical activity/exercise, for the sale of parking permits and as a shop window including marketing and communication for other services including recycling. Community engagement - There are opportunities for co-location for back office facilities for staff who are dealing with common issues and priorities around the library vicinity and to extend the reach for people who are isolated. The new Marylebone library will be in the Seymour Leisure Centre.

- **Housing** – homelessness is city wide and we need to ensure referrals are effective. The street population is going down because there is a lot of resource available. Mental health and substance abuse are critical factors. Library floorspace in Westminster equates to 15 floors of City Hall. There are a range of spaces and people in each area should be asked what they want. There are 22,000 social homes in Westminster – not all of their residents are using libraries. We also need to know the age ranges – facts and figures are key. We should also look at good examples of co-location (from other services in Westminster, and libraries elsewhere) and who uses them. Identify where the gaps in provision are.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Libraries are universal

This is a challenge: as a cradle to grave service which is different to other institutions because of this. In Warwickshire, the core offer is difficult to define because of the range of services; they liken it to the Tesco model – Metro, Local, Express – with varying sizes and levels of service offer. Council decided that its approach was ‘one front door’ via libraries. Councillors recognise ‘libraries first’ as a principle, and getting the most out of libraries provides an alternative to digital by default. Makerspaces – providing expensive technology in an accessible way. The medium has changed (less books, more digital). It’s about providing means and opportunities for contact in a digital world. Ayub has recently visited Aarhus, Denmark (a ‘smart city’) where a new library promotes democratic values and citizenship. Newborns in the city are celebrated in the library with the ring of a bell. New arrivals to the city can get all the information required in the library.

### Diverse communities

There is huge diversity in Westminster which is a key challenge. For example people not understanding really basic stuff like recycling, can lead to a lack of cohesion. What can libraries do (being free to access/very open/diverse service reach) to help with this?

### Building on strengths in the community

The sometimes used, traditional ‘deficit model’ (“we know what’s wrong and we’ll fix it”) needs to be flipped to asset model: i.e. Look at what’s good in a community – and use this to help. Services may need to be prepared to give up detail control to enable this.

### Customer service

Libraries have embraced some aspects of self-service/self-help. Libraries are to do with empowerment in a broader sense – the original ethos (Victorian) was around ‘self-improvement’. This needs to evolve a bit for the modern age but the principles remain in terms of libraries being a place people can go to learn, to broaden their horizons or make real their aspirations. This can point to reading/literacy but also to adult education or all kinds, support into employment, cultural opportunities, supporting business enterprise, etc.

### Accessibility

Libraries are very ‘ideologically accessible’ (i.e. free to use, anyone is welcome) but some of Westminster’s libraries struggle to provide full physical access (for those with disabilities etc). We need to make sure library buildings are set up in a way that enables everybody to use them and benefit from the facilities. Some existing buildings are not fit for purpose – this needs to be considered as part of the council’s wider property assets management piece. Note that this is not just about physical disability, either. Libraries need to be welcoming places for people with other conditions such as autism or dementia.

### Diversification

Libraries are ideally placed for service delivery across a wide range of outcomes that are included in the council’s strategic vision: City for All. They have an especially strong link into the preventative agenda. What more could be commissioned, delivered or provided through libraries? How can they integrate with other services to capitalise on all this? At the same time, what makes libraries distinct and how can we protect this? There may be a risk of libraries losing their speciality and becoming just a collection of services – this could be especially true if library buildings are used simply to host other services, but without true integration.

## Resourcing

The issue of diversifying / integrating with other services raises questions around resourcing. What resources can be identified and secured to support libraries in their work to deliver broader outcomes, beyond their traditionally perceived role?

## Council-wide support

There is staunch support from senior executive guests across all Council services for collaboration and integration of aspects of their services within Library services and vice versa, to provide a healthier, more positive and socially integrated community throughout Westminster.

# THEME AT A GLANCE

## IMPACT ON OUTCOMES

### LIBRARIES AS A PREVENTITIVE SERVICE

- Reducing future need, especially health and wellbeing
- Implications for funding – mitigating future cost but where do the savings fall?
- Can we quantify the savings / financial impact of libraries?
- Role in 'triage' / early identification of issues – implications for staff training / hybrid roles?
- Placement of non libraries staff in libraries?
- Interplay with Family Hubs?

### RANGE OF OUTCOMES

- Our current impact across the range of Libraries Deliver outcomes – strengths and weaknesses?
- Priority areas or all seen as equally important?
- Shifts over time – any future transitions likely to emphasise particular outcomes?
- External context – wider policy agenda; gaps libraries may be filling?
- Alignment with wider council strategy – achieving recognition and libraries taking rightful place as part of core objectives – how to ensure this?

### RANGE AND REACH

- 'Cradle to grave' – benefits of reaching across age ranges?
- Non discriminatory, open to all – how do we use this well?
- How do we make best use of libraries' ability to penetrate into communities, especially hard to reach groups?
- Use of libraries' reach to support other services?
- Information provision and advice – a key role for libraries?

### RESOURCES AND RECOGNITION

- Funding arrangements and resource implications of delivering on behalf of other services?
- Relationships with other council services or external – different?
- How to achieve recognition for libraries' broad impact – evidencing value added?
- Opportunities for hybrid staff roles; implications of this?
- Implications for commissioning relationships, decision making and governance?

# THEME 5

**DELIVERY MODELS**  
(20 MARCH 2018)

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Chris Symons – Deputy Chief Executive, Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL)
- Ciara Eastell – Chief Executive, Libraries Unlimited

## KEY POINTS NOTED

### GLL

- **The GLL model is a social enterprise model** – a staff owned charitable enterprise. Not considered a 'mutual' per se, although should note that the terms 'social enterprise' and 'mutual' are flexible, differently understood and interpreted, and therefore not necessarily mutually exclusive. Some are charitable in nature, some are profit-making.
- **Potential strengths of 'third party provider' models** – Chris sees the key strength of the GLL model as flexibility – sitting between private sector and public/community services, able to draw on advantages from both sides. Also 'whole-service' provision – in addition to delivering the day to day services, GLL manage the buildings, employ the staff and run projects/programmes on specific areas of work. This enables a coherent, consistent and streamlined approach.
- **Importance of effective back office** (HR, legal, member services etc) – Chris felt the value in outsourcing can come from taking cost out of back office and tightening the link/relationship with the front end service. By outsourcing in a hook line and sinker way, with back office included, the back office not only understand how the service works at front end but also the provider is actively invested in the performance of service and all aspects of deliverability etc. It is in their direct interests for the back office and front end to work well individually and together.
- **Results** – demonstrable results since transitioning to GLL include increased in use of libraries (visits, loans) and longer opening hours. The new model has retained the existing staff. A common misconception is that this won't be the case – that people will be removed or replaced. Feedback suggests staff are very satisfied in their work since the change (shown by positive staff survey results).
- **Identifying and assessing delivery model options** – outsourcing is not a model in itself – outsourcing is the outcome but there are various routes/environments

through which that can be done. The model can vary and be tailored to suit the purpose. With this in mind, arguably any model can deliver the outcomes. The key thing is to identify, clarify and commit to those outcomes, then understand the best delivery model approach to achieve them. Size, scope, experience, resilience are some of the key considerations when looking for and selecting appropriate models.

- **Market awareness** – an important practical consideration is how the market might react to councils looking to involve third party providers in library service delivery. Realistically, there isn't a mature market for this currently, which creates challenges with demonstrating value for money as we don't have adequate metrics or frames of reference to demonstrate this.

### Libraries Unlimited

- **Model** – Libraries Unlimited operates as a 'company limited by guarantee', a registered charity, and a public service mutual. The Cabinet Office has a formal definition for what constitutes a public service mutual. It is an organisation which:
  1. has left the public sector (also known as 'spinning out')
  2. continues to deliver public services and aims to have a positive social impact
  3. has a significant degree of staff influence or control in the way it is run.
- **One of many examples** – Libraries Unlimited is one of around 110 such mutuals currently delivering a range different of public services in England. There are four libraries mutuals in the country – Nottinghamshire, Suffolk and York are the others. Nottinghamshire and York combine other services with libraries in their mutuals, while Suffolk and LU are solely library operators.



- **Contract** – the mutual holds a five year contract with DCC, with option for another five years, to deliver library services. Two community representatives and two members of staff sit on the board of trustees with the remaining board members as independent trustees. Operates 50 libraries and four mobile libraries across Devon. They also hold a contract with the Home Office to deliver three prison libraries, as well as operating some FabLabs – maker spaces with technology – and a few other facilities. So the mutual holds a broad and growing portfolio. It is currently a £7m business and due to grow to £9m – among other changes, it has been selected to provide Torbay’s library service.
- **Originated due to huge pressure for savings** – effectively a halving of the libraries budget which led to the management of DCC libraries looking at alternative delivery models for at least some of its libraries. Reputationally very difficult when it starts to look like closures are the only option – communities very protective of their libraries and sometimes specifically of the librarians that staff them. An open minded look at options was called for. The team systematically assessed and scored those options to find way forward.
- **Enablers** – setting up Libraries Unlimited was a huge and complex undertaking. They found it was critical to have:
  - » Political support and confidence, ideally cross party
  - » Senior officer support, to galvanise whole-council effort if needed
  - » Strong, clear leadership, with exceptionally clear vision that can be communicated effectively to staff
  - » Ability to bring staff with you – engagement, active involvement, various mechanisms for meaningful feedback
  - » Extremely skilled project management
- **Savings** – within their first 28 months they did achieve the target £1.5m saving. This showed credibility. With time they’ve been able to get ‘into the black’ and begin to build up financial reserves, which lends sustainability and resilience to the service.
- **Performance / service quality** – this is also better than before. Better addressing marginalised communities. They recently undertook research with the University of Exeter Business School, using Arts Council England (ACE) funding, to look into financial benefits of library services. This type of impact within context of the wider public services landscape can be very hard to quantify. Very hard to understand where costs and savings fall, what counterfactual scenarios are, and what true impact if individual changes are when multiple factors are at play. So this focused research could teach us a lot.
- **Other service improvements** – better marketing and promotion – freer of corporate controls on what can say/do. More opportunity for external funding – ACE is now a key stakeholder and has invested £1m; LU is one of its national portfolio organisations (one of a handful of library services to have achieved this since it was launched in 2016). Individual giving is also now much more of a focus.
- **Staff impacts** – biggest change has probably been for staff though. Generally very positive outcomes - empowerment, personal and professional development for them. LU have found it is critical to recognise that the agenda they want to deliver relies on really skilled and motivated workforce.
- **Resilience and economies of scale in the back office** – these have been important in the Devon model. An early decision was to create/develop their own back office functions to be self-supporting (HR, legal etc and fully independent of council (many mutuals still end up very dependent on the local authority). Some changes were somewhat forced but LU say that, since ‘spinning out’, becoming more and more independent was ultimately beneficial.
- **Collaboration** – LU recognises the huge potential of libraries to work jointly with other council services to deliver shared aims. Undeniably the dynamic definitely changes. There is a need to make an explicit transition to being a separate entity from the council. Strong commissioning relationship is so important – it’s here

that the connections can be made and maintained with other council teams like PH, Employment Support, etc. Ciara recognises there may be some things that are missed as result of her/her team not being embedded within the council's core leadership team, but benefits far outweigh the detriments in her view. There are ways to keep connections and linkages live and useful, but it needs to be consciously and consistently worked at.

- **Culture will always beat strategy** – staff and management commitment, and culture is more important than any choice of delivery model. No model will work without it.
- **Scale can be an issue** – a mutual needs to be big enough to be viable. Although bear in mind it needn't necessarily just be libraries alone. Can join up with other services. Other mutuals (e.g. in York) have more of a blend of services within the model. Broadly speaking, would say you need to be £2m+ as an entity in order to support the various resources etc you need.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Financial considerations

How do profit/bonuses for staff-owners (shareholders) work in a set-up like GLL's? GLL is a charitable social enterprise, and although 'staff-owned' it does not pay profit/performance based bonuses. Surplus is generated through the contracts they operate, but this is reinvested in the services. Other mutual/social enterprises can take profit out, but not ones with charitable status like GLL. Movement to a mutual/social enterprise delivery model may not have massive financial upsides in the immediate term, but other benefits in terms of scope for innovation, agility, flexibility, pace of change etc. Also economies of scale, especially in terms of transactional processes and some front end functions. Ability to spread cost across contracts can also reduce 'unit prices'.

### Impacts for staff

Culture change is important and having a clear ambition in relation to that which is exemplified, communicated and committed to at senior leadership level, is critical.

How do staff identify themselves in an outsourced model? Can be concerns about increased sickness, departures etc but GLL reported that this in their experience this has not materialised. During initial transition must expect certain churn, but they found staff retention stabilised and there were no significant changes in absenteeism. Other examples also suggest these problems don't necessarily follow with outsourced delivery models. Benefits for staff can include increased training and development opportunities – cross-fertilising learning from other industries, e.g. the Eden Project. Learned from National Trust about membership schemes, incentivising service users and making them feel enfranchised / part of something.

### Risks of partnering with large third party organisations

There can be significant unknowns/future changes in ownership, marginalisation and motives which then impact on services and the customer experience. GLL's view is that smaller companies, in more local setting, can be more agile, with better ability to cater to local needs and changing demand. Does the board have specific thoughts on the type of partners WCC may look to partner with, or exercise specific caution around? Does GLL count as a "smaller company" in this context?

### Culture of innovation

This is clearly highly relevant to libraries. Any model would need to not only allow for but specifically facilitate / drive this. Library services need to be dynamic, changeable, flexible - it is increasingly important that they keep up with customer trends and needs. Does this make them less ideally suited to direct local authority control? How might third party involvement vs direct local authority control compare when it comes to scope, appetite and readiness to innovate?

## Operational control

There is a risk of loss of control, operationally, but also of cost savings. Can end up with benefits landing elsewhere, outside of the local authority. Added to this there can be fear of change – this is a natural thing – exacerbated by understandable caution in wake of collapse of Carillion etc. This is why it's so important to understand who your partner is and what their motivations are. Opportunities for beneficial change, protection of services, meeting local need but any partner's priorities must be in alignment with council's own desired outcomes.

## Integration / connectivity

Building in the more strategic aspirations of library services – the link to health services etc, GLL feels aware of these connections and claims ability to cross cut in that way. This may be the case where several areas of council service (or those of partners) are outsourced to one provider. However, is there a risk of library services becoming more 'divorced' from the rest of council delivery – losing some of the key benefits of working together on shared outcomes – if it is operated 'out of house'? On the other hand, what opportunities are presented by more commissioning?

## Use of technology

GLL does its own proactive research into how and where councils should be innovating / developing their library services, generating recommendations and practical solutions for driving better use of IT and digital (both hardware and software). Can 'cross fertilise', applying learning and innovations from other areas of service/contracts they provide. This can be an area where LAs can benefit from some help and an outside perspective. Benefits of tech though are not just about library services working well and modernising in isolation. Do technological advancements in library services need to be aligned/ integrated with the systems and tech used in other council / public services? What is the comparative ability of a third party provider Vs the council itself to achieve this?

## Marketing/promoting the service

Effective marketing and promoting of library services. LU have found this to especially important. What might Westminster need

to think about in terms of 'branding' library services? What presence do they, or could they, have in the minds of the public? If a 'spun out' model were chosen, how might perceptions be affected (libraries having an identity that is distinct from the council itself)?

## Passion is more important than which model

It is clear that in Devon's case success has come from passion. It is not just a process - running these types of services well requires that passion and personal commitment, whatever the model. It is also crucially important to always ensure we're delivering social value. What might Westminster need to do to ensure this passion and commitment is preserved among leadership and staff?

# THEME AT A GLANCE

## DELIVERY MODELS

### MODEL OPTIONS

- Private contracted provider – potential benefits and risks?
- Mutuels – various incarnations, all with pros and cons?
- Volunteer involvement?
- Learning from others – specific suggestions to help us explore the issues?
- Importance of selecting the right partner(s) – alignment of motivations, experience and expertise, etc?
- Maturity of the market – who is there we could work with?

### REPUTATIONAL RISK AND BUY IN

- Challenge to traditional perceptions about public libraries?
- Questions of motivation – perceptions as purely a cost saving initiative?
- Political appetite for alternative delivery models?
- Specific Westminster considerations (partly political, historical, tri-borough etc)?

### STAFFING IMPACTS

- Retention and attrition – specific risks and opportunities?
- Contractual arrangements / terms and conditions?
- Buy in – how to take staff with on the journey?

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Opportunities for savings – real or assumed?
- Where savings 'land'?
- Cost and resource implications for implementation of a new model?

### INNOVATION AND APPROACH

- Greater opportunities and / or drive to innovate in 'spun out' models?
- Freedom to tailor make back office (not bound to council IT systems etc)?
- Independence from local authority governance – any potential for greater freedom to experiment?
- Potential for longer term thinking without reference to political terms, elections?

# THEME

# 6

**CULTURE, HERITAGE AND COHESION**  
(24 APRIL 2018)

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- Sue Williamson – Director of Libraries, Arts Council England (ACE)
- Isobel Hunter – Incoming Chief Executive of Society of Chief Librarians

## KEY POINTS NOTED

### Arts Council England

- **Background** – ACE is a non departmental body under Department of Culture Media and Sport, which took responsibility for libraries in 2011. Understanding of how libraries fit into wider work of ACE has grown significantly since then and is still taking shape. Most difficult thing for library sector to understand is that ACE can't directly fund/provide library services, in terms of the core buildings and staff, but it can support arts activities in libraries, and help them to innovate and thrive.
- **Funding bids** – ACE set aside some of their arts funding specifically for libraries. Some took them up on this by putting in bids, but some found it daunting and didn't attempt to access the funding. Approaches, attitude etc differed greatly across the 151 different library service authorities across the country. ACE identified five universal offers which all libraries should aspire to deliver, to which a sixth has now been added: Health, Learning, Reading, Digital, Information and now Culture. The board noted how this chimes with Libraries Deliver in terms of outcome areas.

Six library services won National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status in the last funding round, and the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) was adopted as a sector support organisation with NPO status. The library services are being seen as beacon providers and hopefully will help others apply and successfully access the funding in future. The funding gives them some guarantee of resource and stability to plan over a longer frame.

- **The future vision** – in 2020 there will be a fresh ACE strategy (to cover 2020–2030). Not just an update in existing doc – looking to think creatively about what ACE is looking to achieve in the coming years. Want to build consideration of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to libraries firmly into this. This will underpin future funding rounds for libraries.
- **Future Funding Rounds** – next funding round for NPOs will be for 2022–2026.

In its first few years as development body for libraries, ACE ringfenced grant (project) funding within a Grants for the arts – libraries strand, but it will not in future ringfence in this way – this was aimed at getting libraries more accustomed to how the process with ACE works. In future, libraries will apply to the same open funding programme (the National Lottery Project Grants scheme, which replaces Grants for the arts) as all other arts organisations and artists. Applications must make sure they align with the five aims outlined above. ACE funding is only guaranteed by central government until 2020, so although they anticipate being able to fund existing applicants/work until 2022, the amount available for bidders may depend on their settlement post-2020.

- **Link to delivery models** – of the six library services that were successful this time around, three had spun out from the local authority. This high proportion (compared to the overall number of services that have spun out) suggests they have the approach, ethos, appetite and skillset to pursue all opportunities / funding streams very actively.
- **Access versus excellence** – is there a natural equilibrium and what is the place for libraries? Sue said there is a natural fit between libraries and tackling inequalities but there also can be a more 'elite' perspective on arts and culture. The balance between arts and mass provision is key – Sport England have done a good job of that, ACE are looking to learn from them. Re: libraries in particular, they can be a gateway for the arts, especially for those with historically low levels of engagement. Some can feel that concert halls, theatres etc are 'not for them' but libraries successfully navigate this and can draw people who otherwise may not engage. Libraries also push artists to think about how they produce and present their art. Libraries being at heart of communities underlines the opportunity further. MC mentioned example of Church Street library which has run an Improv For Elders theatre group encouraging participation and the library service has been jointly running Create Church Street, commissioning artists and local groups during the current phase of regeneration in the area.

- **Looking ahead** – major future priorities for ACE in relation to libraries are:
  - » Wider digital inclusion agenda
  - » Development of British Library intellectual property platform – aspiration is that every library in the country could act as gateway to information that businesses need
  - » Single sign-on (to library digital resources nationwide)
  - » Development of staff – in partnership with CILIP
  - » Talent plan – led by Darren Henley, ACE chief exec
  - » Libraries’ work with development of young people, access to art and culture
  - » Working with libraries task force to ensure smooth transition of the work they do to ACE responsibility in 2020

### Society of Chief Librarians

- **Background** – SCL is in excellent position as a membership body to promote and support development of library services across the country at grass roots level. SCL aims to foster innovation, connect expertise and obtain funding. Universal offers are at the heart of what SCL does. They look at the wide range of things that libraries do but sometimes do not clearly articulate or capitalise on (digital inclusion, health promotion, for example).

This has been important in coming to understand what ‘core’ library services look like, while giving an appreciation of how geographical nuances to meet local need can work in practice.

- **Vision for Archives As Well As Libraries** – archives are a unique facility in themselves, with a special role in society/local communities. Alongside libraries they can provide a connection to the community’s history, a sense of local identity, and learning / engagement opportunities for all.
- **Accessibility** – archives can sometimes be presented as jewel in the crown of some libraries services. Archive collections are displayed and give a sense of uniqueness and specialness, but there can be a risk of

them feeling remote or not very accessible. It doesn’t have to be done in an elite way though – some archives are using really innovative ways to engage and involve people in their collections. In St Helens, a project supported with ACE funding focused on making digitised photograph collections accessible, with local communities providing the information and back stories to complement them. The whole experience was interactive, using the resources in multiple ways for different audiences, age groups etc.

- **Information navigation** – giving the public access to a wealth of information but also, crucially, helping people navigate the flood of information that they are faced with in modern world. Helping individuals to look into issues that really matter to them and, as libraries/archives are sometimes not instinctively viewed by people as part of the council or part of wider government, there is a sort of independence there which feeds into perceptions of honesty and impartiality.
- **Reducing isolation** – Libraries and archives can be a haven for the lonely, they provide a welcoming and accepting environment.
- **Breadth of access** – a vast range of people use them – equality of access, open to all, inclusive. When space is at a premium and costs of many activities and services are high in a place like London / Westminster, that free to access for all is so important.
- **Active involvement** – this is about people exploring their own culture, a sense of ownership/empowerment. It’s self directed learning and on their terms. This generates a real sense of belonging
- **Civic involvement** – sense of involvement, ownership and investment in the local area and community can instigate volunteering etc. ‘Active citizenship’ can be so important for people who might otherwise feel disenfranchised. Also pathways into employment etc.
- **Local roots** – no two libraries are exactly the same, they are grass roots and reflect their community directly. You know broadly what you’ll be getting in terms of services at a library, but each one has individual character.

## ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

### Existing offer

Libraries already offer a lot which they don't necessarily themselves see or badge as 'culture'. This can be quite simple things like song/music based sessions for very young children, but can develop to bring in much more specifically directed, 'consciously' cultural offers.

### Particular challenges in Westminster

Access to arts in London can be expensive. Taster sessions in libraries for some of the big arts/cultural organisations can really encourage people to try things and open up access in an affordable and engaging way. Equally, we can also use the 'prestige factor' - where people have seen we have big names coming into the local library for an event it can have a huge impact on what the community feel about the library and their neighbourhood as a whole – a sense of pride. Westminster probably has particular strength there, as it can get the big names in.

### Encouraging access

We can't force arts on people, we can only create the opportunities. Useful to look at the obstacles people experience to engaging with arts. How can libraries can be instrumental in helping them overcoming those obstacles?

### Impact of Delivery Models

Is there a difference in degree of opportunity for dynamic and innovative ways of doing things in services that have spun out from Local Authority compared those that remain directly council managed? Ultimately a well-managed service is a well-managed service, and spinning out doesn't necessarily make life easier. That said there can be some constraints on people in local authorities that don't necessarily apply to spun out entities - freedom around practical issues (what IT systems used etc), branding and so on. But these can be overcome with the right backing and buy in at a leadership and political level, and by thinking creatively and focusing on opportunity. There is a certainly a dynamism that can sometimes come with spun out organisations, but it's totally achievable within a local authority context also.

### Westminster Archives – existing work

Westminster Archives are the corporate memory of Westminster. The service's quality is recognised through accreditation by the National Archives, one of the few local authority archives to have achieved this. They need to reflect extremely diverse communities of Westminster. AA commented that they always try to include a creative element to the projects they do and specifically work with different groups in community to tell their own unique stories in creative ways. An example is the Cholera On The Thames project. They included a Bangladeshi Womens' Organisation to bring in their perspectives with experience of cholera from that part of the world, bringing that alongside the London story. These could be great foundations on which to build further.

### Budgets and Funding

Archive services generally can't apply for ACE funding unless it's for specific arts-based projects. Westminster archives have secured funding from a number of external sources including Heritage Lottery and the Armed Forces Community Covenant, but would welcome further funding opportunities. The archives service is core funded by the Council but all project funding is external, proactively sought out and secured. The board feels it is very important that archives' core funding from the council should be protected regardless of pressures.

### Active rather than passive

If they choose to, archives can be really active – proactive – to engage people in their collection. Not just waiting for people to come to them but actively going out and promoting/extending the reach of their collections. This means reaching out to different communities and making them feel "I am part of the city, the city is part of me". People want to tell their story and archives can support them to do that. As keepers of local/community history, how can Westminster archives reach out to people and help them to feel that, that history belongs to them; that they are personally a part of it?



### **A role in traumatic events**

Incidents like the air show crash in Shoreham, the tram accident last year near Croydon, and terrorist incidents in London. Archives can work with community to, for example, preserve cards, sentiments and pictures that accumulate around these events. Memorialising and paying respects, then preserving those items and capturing the local 'story' can be a vital part of healing and rebuilding trust. How does the board think this role in preserving memories and honouring stories could be applied in Westminster archives?

### **Local uniqueness**

Archives fundamentally lend a sense of place. Uniqueness of place, specific identity. This is important against the homogenisation of high streets across the country etc. How can we capitalise on this in the way we reimagine Westminster libraries?

### **Celebrating and supporting diversity**

Westminster has a remarkably diverse community which can bring its own challenges but also huge opportunities for the way archives can support local knowledge, pride and connection to history among all types of people. There are opportunities for all sections to learn about their own culture and heritage, but also to be exposed the heritage of others, increasing understanding and fuelling community cohesion. Especially in the context of the recent Windrush situation etc, how might Westminster archives be proactive in supporting local diversity, connection across different community groups and a sense of the area as a true 'home' for all?

### **Connections**

There are important links to other strategies and policy work emerging at a national and local level. Especially the Mayor of London's cultural strategy – the role of libraries should be extensive but there is only a limited number of references to it in the strategy as currently drafted. Also note strategic links to the council's own developing Cultural Strategy.

# THEME AT A GLANCE

## CULTURE, HERITAGE AND COHESION

### BINDING PEOPLE TOGETHER

- Open access leads to mixing across potential divides, exposure to other cultures, socio economic groups etc – does this underpin cohesion?
- Inter-generational opportunities – link to the 'cradle to grave' nature of library services?
- Active citizenship – role in supporting community action, volunteering etc?
- Recognising and using library buildings as familiar focal points where people gather?

### SUPPORTING ARTS AND CULTURE

- Grass roots Vs elite – keeping the balance in arts and culture offer?
- Connecting into wider arts and culture landscape – what London has to offer, also nationally?
- Support for creative industries locally – physical space for work or performance, promotion, connection to employment services, etc?
- Accessing funding streams, e.g. Arts Council funding?

### INCLUSION

- Importance of maintaining accessibility – physical but also opening hours and free of charge?
- Risk of providing specialised services that potentially segment user group or exclude some people?
- Equally, risk of keeping too mainstream / universal and missing whole sections of need?
- Understanding the local community and potential barriers to engagement – language issues, disabilities, social isolation etc?

### MAKING GOOD USE OF ARCHIVES

- Active promotion of/engagement in archives – how to make them accessible and appealing?
- Different audiences – age ranges, different backgrounds, etc?
- Role in celebrating diversity – how can we use this positively?
- Shared local history – how archives can contribute to sense of place and sense of community – pride, belonging and ownership?
- Supporting communities through difficult times – link to wellbeing?
- Links to civic responsibility – respect for local area and each other?



City of Westminster

## Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	24 June 2019
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Committee Work Programme</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Policy, Performance & Communications
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Cabinet Member for Customer Services & Digital Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture & Community
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	All
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	<b>Artemis Kassi x 3451</b> <b>akassi@westminster.gov.uk</b>

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the proposed Committee Work Programme for 2019/20 for approval.

### 2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to review and approve the draft list of suggested Work Programme items (Appendix 1) and prioritise where required.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The proposed Work Programme takes into account suggestions made by the Committee at its last meeting on 4th March, and a long list of topics for 2019/20 that was drawn together through a horizon scanning exercise, discussions with Officers in the relevant services and suggestions from Members.
- 3.2 When reviewing and deciding which topics to include in the Work Programme, the Committee is encouraged to consider:
- where scrutiny can add most value;
  - when would be the best time to consider an item;
  - which items would enable scrutiny to contribute most to the council's priorities;

- the most appropriate way to consider a topic (e.g. committee report, task group work or another approach); and
- which items help the committee best to reflect the voice and concerns of residents.

3.3 The Terms of Reference for the Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee are attached for information (Appendix 2).

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Artemis Kassi x3451**

**[akassi@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:akassi@westminster.gov.uk)**

**APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1: Committee Work Programme

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference for the Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee

**WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020**  
**Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

<b>ROUND ONE</b> <b>24 JUNE 2019</b>		
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Iain Bott Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Communities
Libraries Advisory Board	To receive the report of the independent Libraries Advisory Board. To review the board's recommendations and the council's response	Mike Clarke
Moberly Sports Centre/Everyone Active	To review Active Westminster, including Moberly Sports Centre since the re-opening	Andy Durrant

<b>ROUND TWO</b> <b>23 OCTOBER 2019</b>		
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To receive an update and provide "critical friend" challenge	Councillor Paul Swaddle Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
Call Centres	To review the council's use of call centres and their performance	

**ROUND THREE  
11 DECEMBER 2019**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To receive an update and provide “critical friend” challenge	Councillor Iain Bott Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Communities
Cultural Vision	To feed into the development of a Cultural Vision/Strategy	

**ROUND FOUR  
12 FEBRUARY 2020**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To receive an update and provide “critical friend” challenge	Councillor Paul Swaddle Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
Green Plaques	To contribute towards the development of a green plaque policy	

**ROUND FIVE  
1 APRIL 2020**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To receive an update and provide “critical friend” challenge	Councillor Iain Bott Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Communities
Create Church Street	To review this project, supporting and encouraging arts and culture in a local community and identify lessons that can be learnt	

**ROUND SIX  
TBC**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Paul Swaddle Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
Digital contracts	Review the council's approach to procuring digital services	

**ROUND SEVEN  
TBC**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A	To receive an update and provide "critical friend" challenge	Councillor Iain Bott Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Communities
Voluntary and Community Sector Contracts	Review the Council's approach to VCS Commissioning	

**UNALLOCATED ITEMS**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective for item</b>	<b>Represented by</b>
Youth Strategy	Review the council's approach to youth engagement, including the work of Westminster City Lions and Westminster Youth Foundation	
Made in Libraries/Fun Palaces	To evaluate key areas of success of the Made in Libraries pilot project and where lessons learnt are applicable to the Fun Palaces national scheme pilot	Mike Clarke

**TASK GROUPS AND STUDIES**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Reasons &amp; objective</b>	<b>Type</b>
Digital Strategy	To identify what is best practice in digital services with input from the public and private sector	Task Group
Volunteering in Westminster	Scope of volunteering in Westminster. Evaluate the cost of volunteering to individuals and organisations. What value does volunteering add to those who receive volunteering and volunteers themselves? Long-term impacts of volunteering. Investigate whether the council should do more to direct volunteering towards priorities	Task Group
Access to culture	To review how Westminster families, particularly those on low-incomes, can access culture within the City	Task Group



### **Communities & Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee**

8 Members of the Council (5 Majority party Members and three Minority Party Member), but shall not include a Member of the Cabinet.

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

- (a) To carry out the Policy and Scrutiny functions, as set out in Article 6 of the Constitution in respect of matters relating to all those duties within the terms of reference of the Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community and the Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital.
- (b) To carry out the Policy and Scrutiny function in respect of matters within the remit of the Council's non-executive Committees and Sub-Committees, which are within the broad remit of the Committee, in accordance with paragraph 13 (a) of the Policy and Scrutiny procedure rules.
- (c) Matters within the broad remit of the Cabinet Members referred to in (a) above which are the responsibility of external agencies.
- (d) To scrutinise the duties of the Lead Members which fall within the remit of the Committee or as otherwise allocated by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.
- (e) To scrutinise any Bi-borough proposals which impact on service areas that fall within the Committee's terms of reference.
- (f) Any other matter allocated by the Westminster Scrutiny Commission.
- (g) To have the power to establish ad hoc or Standing Sub-Committees as Task Groups to carry out the scrutiny of functions within these terms of reference.
- (h) To oversee any issues relating to Performance within the Committee's terms of reference.
- (i) To have the power to scrutinise those partner organisations that are relevant to the remit of the Committee.
- (j) To consider any Councillor Calls for Action referred by a Ward Member to the Committee.

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