



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

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

Meeting Date: **Thursday 9th January, 2020**

Time: **7.00 pm**

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

Members:

Councillors:

David Harvey (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, Artemis Kassi.

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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 pecuniary interests or any other other significant interest in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

(Pages 5 - 16)

4. WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2019-2020, and to note the Committee Action Tracker.

(Pages 17 - 24)

5. CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES AND DIGITAL - UPDATE

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

(Pages 25 - 36)

6. CABINET MEMBER FOR SPORTS, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY - UPDATE

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

(Pages 37 - 54)

7. CULTURAL STRATEGY

To provide comment and feed into the development of a Cultural Strategy.

(Pages 55 - 78)

8. CONSERVING HERITAGE

(Pages 79 - 82)

To receive an overview of and to discuss the council's roles and functions for conserving heritage in Westminster, and the associated challenges.

Stuart Love
Chief Executive
20 December 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 **Wednesday 9th October 2019**, Room 18.04, 18th Floor, City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Lorraine Dean, Murad Gassanly, David Harvey (Chairman), Lindsey Hall, Louise Hyams, Andrea Mann, Guthrie McKie and Hamza Taouzzale.

Also Present: Councillors Paul Swaddle and Karen Scarborough, David Pettitt (Senior Project Manager) and Artemis Kassi (Scrutiny Officer/Committee Officer), Mark Cridge (Chief Executive, mySociety).

Apologies: Councillor Richard Elcho

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 Councillor Richard Elcho gave apologies for his absence, with Councillor Lindsey Hall substituting. All Members were present.
- 1.2 As Councillor Tim Barnes had stepped down from the Committee, nominations for chairman were invited. Councillor David Harvey was nominated and elected as chairman.

RESOLVED: That Councillor David Harvey be elected as Chairman of the Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

- 1.3 Councillor Guthrie McKie advised the committee that he would be stepping down from the Committee after the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 **RESOLVED that:** the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2019 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

4. WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER

- 4.1 Artemis Kassi (Scrutiny Officer/Committee Officer) presented the Committee's Work Programme for 2019-20.

- 4.2 The Committee discussed the Work Programme and Action Tracker from its June meeting and the agenda for its next meeting in December 2019. Councillor David Harvey suggested that the Committee undertake a task group examining Artificial Intelligence ethics in local government. Councillor Guthrie McKie referred to the Committee's June meeting, including the independent Libraries Advisory Report and its recommendations, and queried tracking implementation of and outcomes from those recommendations. The Committee agreed that there should be a process by which to work with the Cabinet member to support and monitor implementation. Councillor Hamza Taouzzale suggested that, given recent events in the city, it would be timely and apt to bring forward scrutiny of youth engagement and youth strategy to an earlier point in the work programme.

4.3 **RESOLVED that:**

1. the order of the Work Programme would be reconsidered to align with the members' discussions at the meeting.

5. CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES & DIGITAL

- 5.1 Councillor Paul Swaddle, the Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital, updated the Committee on key issues in his portfolio and highlighted the Customer Service and Digital Strategy and Programme and the Digital Board; the re-design, overhaul and re-launch of the Westminster City Council website; the FamilyStory Pilot; the replacement in August 2019 of the Report It forms by the Fix My Street platform; the live streaming pilot for Planning Committees; the progress in roll out and improved connectivity in broadband since adopting a citywide wayleave approach for council stock; the Connect Westminster scheme; the Local Full Fibre Networks bid; and the 5G Small Cell Concession contract.

- 5.2 The Committee discussed the roll out of broadband. Councillor Hamza Taouzzale asked about the spread of broadband in Queen's Park and whether it would be pushed all the way. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised that the roll out of broadband installation is directed by the providers themselves, not by the Council, though the Council is working with a provider which targets the estates within Westminster. Councillor Swaddle advised the Committee that the aim is for inclusive digital, and with this roll out programme, all homes and business premises will have fast-fibre

broadband to the premises, unlike, for example, BT provision which ensures fibre provision to a box in the street.

- 5.3 Councillor Andrea Mann asked about the reach and timelines for this inclusive roll out, particularly with respect to harder to reach communities. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised that the discovery phase of what needs to be done has not yet been carried out and that currently the council website remains the biggest digital footprint. Councillor Swaddle mentioned that the aspiration is for a launch of the revised website in 2020 and that he would keep the Committee informed. Councillor Andrea Mann asked when the hard launch of the Fix My Street platform would take place. Councillor Swaddle advised that there are several services which are not yet integrated, particularly concerning licensing and noise issues and that the priority for now is to ensure that issues are being reported.
- 5.4 Councillor Murad Gassanly observed that residents often raise objections in planning committees on two grounds: loss of light and loss of privacy and that presentations from technical people do not always convince residents. Councillor Gassanly queried whether 3D technology could be used in planning applications and suggested that this would be more useful than percentages on a screen. Members discussed how this was beyond the remit of the Cabinet Member and not a requirement, though developers may be encouraged to do this.
- 5.5 Councillor Louise Hyams expressed concern for those who may be left behind and queried the alternatives to digital for communication or engagement with the council. Councillor Paul Swaddle reinforced that digital should be the channel of choice for communication with the council, not the only channel. Councillor Swaddle observed that there will be issues for residents where digital may not be appropriate and that there are digitally excluded in all age groups, for a variety of reasons
- 5.6 Councillor Lorraine Dean praised the FamilyStory Pilot and asked how quickly the programme would more widely rolled out. Councillor Paul Swaddle explained that this was being explored and that he would provide more information outside of the committee meeting. Councillor Swaddle advised that it is better to get the pilot programme right in one service before rolling out elsewhere.
- 5.7 Councillor Murad Gassanly referred to the livestreaming of planning committees and commented that the meeting on 8th October had been filmed. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised that, whilst he had not yet received the feedback from that meeting, he is committed the delivery of better services for residents through transformation of digital; the use of technology in social care; a whole council approach to the ownership of digital, with proper support for staff development; and digital exclusion. The Committee commented on how refurbished council laptops could be used to reduce digital exclusion, for example, by the Westminster Employment Service or in its role as corporate parent.

5.3 RESOLVED that:

1. the report be noted;
2. the Committee Members receive information on the roll out of the FamilyStory Pilot;
3. the Committee Members receive information about the broadband mapping service; and
4. the Committee Members receive information about the programme of refurbishment of old council computer stock and opportunities for leveraging contacts to assist residents, including Looked After Children or clients of Westminster Employment Service.

6. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE: SPORTS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY

6.1 Councillor David Harvey advised committee members that, other than in exceptional circumstances, he would usually expect alternate attendance from the Cabinet Members being scrutinised by the Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee received a written update on key priorities within the Cabinet Member portfolio, which included highlights of the ActiveWestminster Strategy; progress with the 'No Ball Games' signage; information about current usage of Westminster sports facilities; an update about the Westminster City Lions pilot programme; and the engagement process since the publication of Connecting Libraries, the independent Libraries Advisory Board report in April 2019.

6.2 RESOLVED that:

1. the report be noted; and
2. the Committee Members be invited to submit any comments or questions arising from the update to the Cabinet Member via the Scrutiny Officer.

7. DIGITAL SOLUTIONS: REPORT IT REPLACEMENT – FIX MY STREET

7.1 Councillor David Harvey welcomed Mark Cridge and David Pettit. David Pettit explained the approach taken, including how in January 2008 the MyWestminster account had been created. David Pettit outlined the benefits, including how reports that were made online went direct to operations, and the main negative, which was that the performance of the solution. He explained that this feedback came from all stakeholders, including Cabinet Members and residents and also via social media.

7.2 David Pettit then explained how in August 2019 the relationship with mySociety started. As a result of this, the authentication process was changed, allowing the council to have greater ownership of it. Mr Pettit also elaborated how the modifications have improved the resident experience so that a user can log in using a social media account, there is a core customer record, any reports pass through

the account direct into the line of business system and reports are location centric. Mr Pettit explained that, whilst not perfect and with some areas of improvement remaining, this has resulted in a better process.

- 7.3 David Pettit related that there had been 3,300 reports in under two months, which was as expected and allowed for seasonal change. Mr Pettit explained to the committee that 40% of reported complaints related to fly tipping, graffiti, street lights and abandoned bikes. He described the Report It system as having been “clunky” whereas this was not the case of Fix My Street. Mr Pettit further explained how as part of the modifications to the process, they had taken the opportunity to reduce the number of questions asked of the customer in the Fix My Street process, enable easier mobile usage and remove the log in mandate to facilitate reporting. Mr Pettit highlighted the two-factor authentication, the evolution of the old platform, the inclusion of certain report types as standard and the savings to be leveraged from the new system. Mr Pettit also mentioned that historically the council’s engagement with users of these services had not been good but that there would be sessions testing Fix My Street further before roll out to relevant services and a programme of continuous improvement.
- 7.4 Mark Cridge introduced himself as a former long-term Westminster resident and explained that mySociety was a Not For Profit organisation, unusual as a charity for its technology focus in addition to its focus on democracy and community, using Open Source data. Mark Cridge mentioned examples of mySociety’s work, including Write to Them, a Freedom of Information (FOI) portal, the success of which was illustrated by the fact that 25% of FOI requests were channelled through mySociety. Mr Cridge highlighted that mySociety worked in 40 countries around the world and that Fix My Street was one of their most important services. He explained that mySociety operated in public as much as possible and also how over the last two years, their commercial service had rolled out Fix My Street to 22 councils. He mentioned that on 9th December the Fix My Street service would be going live for Transport for London (TfL). Mark Cridge gave a further example of the Fix My Street application in the TfL context and outlined how any report concerning red routes, bus shelters and traffic lights across London, including for Westminster, would go straight to TfL, rather than to Westminster City Council. Mr Cridge emphasised how this required the knitting together of complex infrastructure. He then proceeded with a live demonstration of the Westminster Fix My Street system to committee members and invited questions.
- 7.5 Mark Cridge demonstrated how a user making a complaint can see the reports made by other users and that the advantage of this was the avoidance of duplication. Councillor Andrea Mann queried whether when reporting an issue it was possible to opt not to make it public. Mark Cridge responded that mySociety was taking instructions on how to deal with noise and other anti-social complaints. Mr Cridge mentioned that a solution might be an alert to the existence of multiple reports. Councillor Lindsey Hall also raised other circumstances, such as licensing reviews, where a complainant might need to complain without being singled out.

Councillor Paul Swaddle advised that all complaints could be anonymous and that the default was not to publish. David Pettit observed that given the high volumes of noise complaints, mapping the complaints might not be the optimum solution. Councillor Andrea Mann asked whether it was possible to see whether a particular block of flats was noisy. David Pettit replied that it would be possible to interrogate the data. Councillor Murad Gassanly queried whether the Licensing Service would have access to the data and Mr Pettit confirmed this. Councillor Lindsey Hall observed that this system had potential to be a “game changer” with information about how many other complaints had been made and the time of day. Councillor Paul Swaddle outlined the challenge around noise complaints, including the source of the noise, and explained how for example a pub might be an obvious noise source, but often the noise source was hard to determine and not obvious. Councillor Swaddle also highlighted a further advantage of the new system which could also act as a balance and check to show volume of complaints or a lack of such volume. Councillor Lindsey Hall observed that the system had potential as a way to deal with vexatious complaints.

- 7.6 Mark Cridge demonstrated how to lodge a new report, showing the map function, and explained how as new feeds of data became available, the system would be able to draw on those. Councillor Murad Gassanly praised the mobile functioning of the system. Councillor Guthrie McKie queried how the system dealt with multiple problems from the one same location. Councillor Paul Swaddle replied that the system treated these as separate issues because each problem went to a different workflow and explained the difficulty of making the system sensitive to free text. Councillor Andrea Mann suggested the solution of a tick for each issue but David Pettit observed that this system was easier than the previous one and explained that three reports would be required as there would be different information to capture for each issue. Councillor Mann queried whether this could be completed via one log in and David Pettit confirmed this. Councillor Paul Swaddle added that on the map function it would be possible for a user to report another issue at the same location as well as to see when an issue has been resolved and the job has closed down. Councillor Swaddle gave an example of having reported an issue on a Sunday and within hours it had been fixed as it had gone directly into the workflow and highlighted that this new system was much faster and more responsive than the previous system.
- 7.7 Mark Cridge demonstrated asset layers using street lights, which enabled users to identify and select individual street lights. Councillor Andrea Mann queried whether for litter and fly tipping there was an asset layer for bins. The committee was advised that this did not exist but that there was a separate project for mapping assets such as bins. Mark Cridge observed that it was not necessary to solve all issues at once but for the Westminster Fix My Street to evolve over time.
- 7.8 Councillor Mann queried whether as a user it would be possible to add information or include, for example, video evidence, which might be useful in a noise complaint, like drilling. Mark Cridge stated that this was not possible and Councillor Paul

Swaddle referred to privacy issues. Councillor Swaddle also mentioned that his objective was to solve lots of the easier problems and streamline the reporting process. He also observed that there were wider questions and it was not always clear cut whether because an issue was solvable, it should be solved. Mark Cridge added that, whilst technically possible to upload video content, this raised concerns as to how such content could be displayed to other people and that for the moment the workflow used photos and text. Councillor David Harvey mentioned the challenges around using video footage, for example, in the context of nuisance neighbour issues and also referred to the plans for asset mapping, including the microchipping of bins. Councillor Paul Swaddle observed that the focus for Fix My Street was intended to deal with reporting of high volume, standard issues and not as the way of communicating every issue to the council, especially where there were call centres or issues were emergency-related. Councillor Swaddle also referred to the prompts contained within the system for urgent issues.

- 7.9 Councillor Louise Hyams queried whether the system provided an “other” category for issues or complaints which did not fit into any of the Fix My Street listed categories. Mark Cridge replied that this was subject to instructions for Westminster City Council. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised the committee members that not all council services were currently being serviced by this product but that whilst more were being moved across to it there was still the option to send an email. Committee members discussed highways and waste in the context of Fix My Street as well as terminology and it was agreed that “fly tipping” is a relatively well understood term.
- 7.10 Mark Cridge described the log in procedure, including via the MyWestminster account, and how users, including members, could subscribe to email notifications for issues within a particular ward. Mr Cridge also explained that there were more opportunities to add information and that Fix My Street was also being updated by other councils, allowing Westminster City Council to benefit from those updates. Mr Cridge also mentioned that mySociety was in discussions with the Business Investment Districts (BIDs).
- 7.11 Councillor David Harvey invited further questions from the committee members once the demonstration was completed. Councillor Murad Gassanly queried whether there was potential for an app for the service. Councillor Paul Swaddle replied that part of the digital programme and officer research was to determine what Westminster City Council’s app strategy should be: a “Swiss Army penknife” app or separate apps. Councillor Swaddle explained that as part of the collaboration with Fix My Street, the digital programme was now deeply linked to Westminster’s services and that anything which was not within their workflows would come in as an email and dealt with on a daily basis. Councillor Swaddle highlighted an additional advantage of Fix My Street, which was that the user did not need to know the boundaries of their authority to make a complaint. Mark Cridge added that there would be new versions of the national Fix My Street app and that users would only receive reports that they had opted in to receive.

- 7.12 Committee members discussed usability of apps in various situations. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised members that this was being explored as part of the council's app strategy. Councillor David Harvey praised the system but raised the question of how resolution of the issues being reported was followed up. Councillor Harvey queried how it was ensured that after the report came through via the system the same issue had indeed been resolved. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised that his own remit as Cabinet Member was to ensure that digital and customer services work, and mentioned the issue of raising of raising expectations about resolution of issues within the remit of other Cabinet portfolios. Committee members discussed messaging around when problems would be dealt with, efficiency, triage of issues and managing workflows.
- 7.13 Councillor Hamza Taouzzale raised the issue of parking without permits. Councillor Paul Swaddle advised that there was a move towards digital permits, avoiding the need for display of a physical permit, and that enforcement officers would check number plates against the Westminster system. Councillor Swaddle advised that traders may or may not display a permit. Councillor Swaddle also discussed the interaction between the resident and the council, especially in the parking enforcement context, seasonal variations and the ability to check whether there was a parking infringement.
- 7.14 Councillor David Harvey thanked Councillor Paul Swaddle, Mark Cridge and David Pettit for their attendance and contributions. Councillor Harvey announced that there would be a short break in proceedings.

8. ACCESS TO CULTURE TASK GROUP DRAFT REPORT

- 8.1 Councillor David Harvey welcomed Councillor Karen Scarborough in her capacity as Chair of the Access to Culture Task Group.
- 8.2 Councillor Karen Scarborough introduced the work of the Access to Culture Task Group and provided some context to members concerning the changes in portfolio which required the task group to report to this Committee. Councillor Scarborough explained that the work of the Access to Culture task group had originally fallen within the remit of the Economic Development, Education and Place Shaping Policy and Scrutiny Committee. She outlined that the task group set out to investigate the barriers to access to culture and explained that, whilst the original scope had focused on Westminster families on low-incomes, this had widened to all residents. Councillor Scarborough reported that this had been an exciting subject to investigate with enthusiastic members, including committee members Councillors Andrea Mann and Guthrie McKie, and that task group members had received evidence from a variety of fantastic witnesses organised by the Policy and Scrutiny Officer. She also thanked Councillor Paul Swaddle for his help and contributions, mentioning that he had attended the task group's final meeting. Councillor Scarborough invited the committee to refer to the draft task group report recommendations.

- 8.3 Councillor Karen Scarborough explained that task group members had investigated work by other local authorities, such as Cambridge City Council or Bracknell Forest when examining barriers to culture or integration of services. Councillor Scarborough referred to the smart card schemes used by Bracknell Forest and proposed by Cambridge to unify access to council services such as libraries, leisure, Free School Meals (FSM) and Adult Social Care, and to the advantages for residents of one multi-purpose smart card. She observed that the task group did not recommend implementation of everything at once and that Westminster City Council was fortunate to be coming to this now as some of the work had already been done. Councillor Scarborough referred to the recommendation to improve the Westminster City Save card which, though not widely known, had potential and, as recommended in the task group's second recommendation, could also be integrated into a smart card.
- 8.4 Councillor Karen Scarborough mentioned the recommendation work to encourage support for and increase and improve access to culture in Westminster schools by wider roll-out of the Westminster's Children's University, currently involving nine schools. Councillor Scarborough mentioned aspects of the scheme, including the graduation ceremony at Westminster University and its popularity with current participants. She also mentioned closer co-operation between cultural institutions and schools highlighted other schemes from the draft report, such as the Rolls-Royce STEAM Evolution Programme, as an example of widening access to culture and science. Councillor Scarborough stated that she had met Paul Broadhead of Rolls-Royce earlier that day to discuss the programme in more detail. She also cited the work in widening access to culture of The Wallace Collection with its Young Curators Programme with St Vincent's RC Primary School, which had great benefits for participants' confidence as well as enabling them to list the experience on a CV. Councillor Scarborough emphasised the task group's finding that a major barrier to access to culture was communication of the offer to residents and how instigating and supporting cultural ambassadors within Westminster schools would be a way to disseminate information to younger residents.
- 8.5 Councillor Karen Scarborough referred to the Leader's City Lions programme and the task group's fifth recommendation that this programme should be embedded as the primary conduit by which to increase cultural experience for 13 to 16 year-olds in Westminster. Councillor Scarborough mentioned the recommendation to work more closely with cultural partners and stakeholders in Westminster to create more opportunities and experiences for Westminster families, school children, City Lions and older residents as part of a more holistic approach. She referred again to the task group's original focus on access to culture for families on low incomes and how this scope widened as the task group conducted its research. Councillor Scarborough then emphasised that the multi-purpose card approach had wider benefits for all residents and cited Councillor Christabel Flight's Silver Sunday where older residents would be able to tap into cultural offers all year. She mentioned the seventh recommendation of the automatic enrolment of every child born in Westminster for a library card to be followed by a further round of enrolment

at primary school entry. Councillor Scarborough stated how this acts as a gateway for families to services and described this as a “win-win” situation for the council, enabling early access to services and culture for residents whilst allowing the council to gather data which could be used to tailor services and target resources.

- 8.6 Councillor Karen Scarborough elaborated on the task group’s eighth and ninth recommendations, to bring culture to the community by use of community venues in wards such as Queen’s Park or Churchill, and a dedicated budget for culture. Councillor Scarborough concluded that there were a number of ways that this could be financed, including via ward budgets and referred to discussions with the Finance Department. Councillor David Harvey thanked Councillor Scarborough and invited Councillors Andrea Mann and Guthrie McKie to comment. Councillor Mann referred to a recent report of the Cultural Learning Alliance concerning the importance of culture and arts and the increasing evidence of this as being a national conversation and how timely the report felt. Councillor Scarborough agreed and pointed to the recent changes to the Ofsted inspection framework, which included cultural capital and the importance for Westminster schools of this. Councillor Mann also referred to the importance of culture and the arts for mental health and employment opportunities. She highlighted the vital importance of bringing culture into the community, especially in the Churchill ward which did not have a community arts venue (like Paddington Arts) and how the eighth recommendation sought to address that.
- 8.7 Committee members discussed the draft report, the cultural offer in Westminster and other opportunities to increase access to culture. Councillor Murad Gassanly queried whether the council had explored integrating cultural space as a requirement under section 106 or CIL. Councillor Gassanly mentioned that the council knew which five wards are the worst affected. Councillor Karen Scarborough mentioned that this may have been happening but needs to be re-emphasised. Councillor Lindsey Hall mentioned the number of private schools in Westminster and queried whether collaboration with them had been explored. Councillor Scarborough mentioned the barrier of residents not taking up the offer. Councillor Mann also referred to the opportunities for leverage.
- 8.8 Councillor David Harvey noted that there was wide agreement from the committee about the report and the task group’s work, and invited comment from Councillor Guthrie McKie. Councillor McKie shared two points: the work by Cambridge City Council for improved access to culture and social mobility using Free School Meals and the work of Queen’s Park Primary School via the Westminster Children’s University. Artemis Kassi referred the Rolls-Royce programme which used pupil premium as a measure of which schools to select for the programme and to comments by Councillors Scarborough and McKie, and mentioned how the evidence from Queen’s Park Primary School had demonstrated that part of the Westminster Children’s University work was to bring parents and carers along on the cultural journey so that the cultural experiences became part of the family’s culture. Councillor Andrea Mann agreed and referred to the library card enrolment.

Councillor Karen Scarborough mentioned that the task group recommended a card and a website as the mechanism for increasing access to culture. Councillor Louise Hyams also praised the task group's work and suggested making contact with Alex Beard and the Society of London Theatre as well as wider publicity for the Central Tickets scheme. Councillor Scarborough mentioned that this relationship building was for Councillor Iain Bott as the Cabinet Member.

- 8.9 Councillor Murad Gassanly mentioned that not all residents would share the same idea of culture and would not want to attend theatre or opera performances. Councillor Karen Scarborough pointed to this being recognised in the report, which had a diverse definition of culture. Councillor Gassanly stated that popular culture is rarely mentioned and noted that many of his ward residents would attend ComiCon. Councillor Scarborough mentioned that the report definition was broad. Councillor Mann referred to the necessity for the removal of barriers and for the person to see an opera or theatre performance and then decide that this was not what they wanted to do and the importance of equality of opportunities. Councillor Mann also described performers discussing going to their first performance, often with their school and the importance of for children of seeing diversity in representation in venues.
- 8.10 Councillor David Harvey commented that he had appreciated the reference to the work of the Black Tickets Matter. Councillor Harvey referred to the recommendation for a dedicated culture budget and suggested that the recommendation incorporate a reference to using the budget to improve cultural capital. In view of the resource situation of local government, Councillor Harvey suggested using social obligation with partners to obtain match funding to build the culture budget in stages. He noted the importance of arts and culture for mental health, particularly for older residents. Councillor Harvey also noted the endorsement of the report by the committee.
- 8.11 Councillor Lindsey Hall mentioned the importance of corporate sponsorship and the BIDs, referring to the Northbank BID's sponsorship of a musical play written by and produced for children and young people. Councillor Harvey suggested encouraging greater cultural capital work by the private schools in Westminster for Westminster schools. He also referred to Councillor Gassanly's comment concerning differing definitions of culture and recommended using the widest range of cultural venues. Councillor Hall suggested holding a networking event and Councillor Harvey recommended using the Lord Mayor's Parlour. Councillor Scarborough stated that this was already in place and that the report launch event would be held on 21st November in the Lord Mayor's Parlour. Councillor Gassanly cautioned on how to integrate section 106 if physical infrastructure was important.
- 8.12 Councillor Paul Swaddle supported the use of digital as a means to support the report's proposals, but there were challenges. Residents will not always want Council offers and facilities and digital approaches will not necessarily solve challenges of engagement. Councillor Scarborough referred to the successful work

of Councils with card-based schemes to drive up recycling rates via smart card schemes. Councillor David Harvey supported reasonable caution, digital did not provide universal answers, but committee members all supported exposing residents to new experiences via digital services. Councillor Swaddle agreed that digital could support the agenda but it also had to be remembered that it did not make sense to build different things for different parts of the council, also that external providers existed. That said, Councillor Swaddle stated that, he had already started work on exploring the recommendations and how this might work for Westminster. Councillor Andrea Mann mentioned the work done by other local authorities and the Smart User Group. Councillor Swaddle emphasised solutions that suited Westminster, although a pan-London solution might be piloted in Westminster. Councillor Mann mentioned the flexibility of the smart card scheme in the evidence received by the task group. Councillor Swaddle mentioned the single account approach already favoured at the council and referred to the team conducting the further investigations needed. All Committee members would be invited to the launch at 9:30 am on 21st November in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.

8.13 The Committee commended the work of the task group and approved its draft report and recommendations. Councillor David Harvey warmly thanked Councillors for their contributions.

8.14 **RESOLVED that**

1. Subject to the committee's comments, the report be approved and adopted and the recommendations communicated to the relevant Cabinet Members.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 None.

The meeting ended at 9.33 pm.

NEXT MEETING: 11 December 2019

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE: _____



Communities and Customer Services Policy & Scrutiny Committee

Date:	9 th January 2020
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2019/20 Work Programme and Action Tracker
Report of:	Director of Policy, Performance & Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Aaron Hardy 07971 026070 ahardy1@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1. This report presents the current version of the work programme for 2019/2020

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Review and approve the draft list of suggested items (appendix 1) and prioritise where required.
- Note the action tracker (appendix 2).

3. Work Programme

3.1 The proposed list of topics (appendix 1) takes in to account comments by the committee at its previous meeting.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers, please contact Aaron Hardy.

ahardy1@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Work Programme 2019/20

Appendix 2 - Action Tracker

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

ROUND THREE 9 January 2020		
Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
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	
Heritage in Westminster	Round table discussion	

ROUND FOUR 12 FEBRUARY 2020		
Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To receive an update and provide “critical friend” challenge	Councillor Paul Swaddle Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy		
Voluntary and Community Sector Rents		
Complaints	A review of how the council deals with substantial complaints and persistent items.	

**ROUND FIVE
1 APRIL 2020**

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
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**

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
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**

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
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		
Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
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		
Subject	Reasons & objective	Type
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 - Completed
Digital privacy and ethics		
Call centres		

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ACTION TRACKER
Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee
2019/2020

ROUND 3 16 October 2019		
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up
Cabinet Member Update – Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital	The Committee to be advised how the council uses old/refurbished stock or leverages relationships to assist residents in need (Westminster Employment Service or Looked After Children)	In progress

ROUND 2 10 July 2019		
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up
Cabinet Member Update: Sports, Culture and Community	The Committee requested that data be provided on the age and ethnicity of people using Westminster's sports and leisure facilities	Completed
Cabinet Member Update: Customer Services and Digital	Committee members to submit any comments or questions arising from the written update to the Cabinet Member	Completed
Libraries Service – Report of the Independent Advisory Board and Future Strategic Direction	A site visit to the Idea Store in Tower Hamlets to be arranged	To be reviewed/re-arranged
Moberly Sports Centre First Year	A breakdown to be provided of the percentage of people using the Moberly Sports Centre who were residents of Westminster, compared to those from LB Brent and other boroughs	In progress
Moberly Sports Centre First Year	Written confirmation to be provided setting out how the original project plan and specification had been successfully delivered	In progress
Moberly Sports Centre First Year	A site visit to the Moberly Sports Centre to be arranged	To be re-arranged

ROUND 1 May 2019		
Agenda Item	Action	Status/Follow Up
	NO ACTION ITEMS	



Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	January 2020
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Cabinet Member Update
Report of:	Councillor Paul Swaddle, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Customer Services and Digital
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for All
Report Authors and Contact Details:	Julia Corkey and Gerald Almeroth Ext. 3411

1. Cabinet Member Priorities

- 1.1** As mentioned in my previous report to this Committee, 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.
- 1.2** To this end, this report provides an overview of the progress against my priorities since my last update to the Committee in September 2019.

2. Customer Experience and Digital Strategy and Programme

- 2.1** The Customer Experience and Digital (CED) Programme was established in Summer 2019 and has been working across the organisation to understand what the areas of priority need to be and how best the Programme can support service areas to deliver their digital ambitions. There are a number of workstreams which have been agreed and the plan for the Programme will be finalised in the coming weeks. The work is being overseen by the CED Board and the Customer and Digital Standards Board (CDSB).
- 2.2** One of the initial deliverables of the programme was the creation of a CED Strategy. The team have been engaging with internal and external stakeholders to make sure we understand what is important to our customers and have an evidence-based approach for the document. This is currently scheduled to go to Cabinet in the coming weeks.
- 2.3** A review of the Council's Contact Centres was one of the first projects to begin under the programme. The project has undertaken a piece of discovery work across our ten Contact Centres (four internal – Housing, Adult and Children's Social Care, School Admissions and the rest external contracts) to review demand, levels of satisfaction, cost and contracts. This intelligence is being used to develop recommendations for the future operating model to achieve highest levels of customer satisfaction.

Through its audit of contact, it also identified a large number of phone numbers and email addresses on our website which are not managed by the Contact Centres. This is an issue as this contact is not always the best route for customers (e.g. some listed numbers were no longer live), is not visible in our contact statistics and is not an efficient way of handling customer contact. The numbers and email addresses have been shared with service areas for review, with the ambition of significantly reducing the number of phone and email contact options on the website to improve customer satisfaction when customers contact us.

3. Westminster City Council's (WCC) Website

New website project

- 3.1** The Council website overhaul project has reached the end of a successful two-month discovery process. This involved in-depth internal and external

research, a deep-dive analysis of the existing WCC website, and engagement with residents (including live user testing).

- 3.2 This has resulted in robust recommendations to deliver a user-centric, seamless new website in 2020. We are in the process of confirming direction of travel from these recommendations, ensuring synergies with business requirements. A more in-depth delivery timeline for the new website will be available soon.
- 3.3 Meanwhile, strong progress is being made on two connected workstreams, running in parallel. The procurement process for the design phase of the new website (Alpha stage) is underway.
- 3.4 Also, a new, dedicated team to support the delivery of the new website's vastly-improved content has hit the ground running. Additional, focussed content specialists have been in place since November, and have already audited hundreds of pages.

Website top-level redesign

- 3.5 Members will be aware that a top-level only, Council website redesign project went live in Summer 2019. This provided 'quick win' visual changes to modernise our offer while we prepare for the bigger upcoming website overhaul.
- 3.6 The updated designs have presented an unmissable opportunity to test a different approach, and this has been invaluable during the Discovery Project. Analysis of the new homepage, as well as updated menu pages (e.g. for apply and pay, licensing and planning) has helped provide a clear, robust direction for testing during the Alpha stage.
- 3.7 There has been positive feedback to the new templates with regards to providing a cleaner, more contemporary look and feel that better reflects the WCC brand.
- 3.8 The Digital Communication team has also been switching the order of tiles and content in response to data (e.g. having seen that a proportionately larger number of users were clicking on a menu page option towards the bottom of a page, the tile was moved to the top for an easier user experience).
- 3.9 However, as expected, the new designs have highlighted areas for improvement, having been live for several months. This has fed into ideas for Alpha testing and will be addressed in the new website.

Website Re-platforming (Content Management System) Project

- 3.10** Alongside the discovery project, we are running the website re-platforming Content Management System (CMS) project - to ensure the Council has the best technical platform to support our future ambitions for our digital front door and that we are able to meet customer needs and interact with other social media channels.
- 3.11** High-level, bi-borough requirements around what a new CMS should do have been gathered. Both WCC and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) have contributed to this from the perspective of security, technical architecture, functionality and more.
- 3.12** The most-used CMS systems across the public sector have been analysed, and research carried out with leading councils, looking at the benefits and drawbacks of their platforms as well as analysing them against our own high-level requirements. From this, a recommendation of Drupal 8 was put forward, and ratified.
- 3.13** Procurement will begin imminently to find an agency to help us put together page designs and overall 'look and feel' for the new Westminster site. We will also be investigating the option of using already finished basic designs from other local authorities. Once this design phase is underway, we will begin a separate procurement exercise to find a partner to build the designs within Drupal 8, as well as host and support both council sites.

4. Westminster City Council's Social Media Strategy

- 4.1** An ambitious, 12-month social media strategy and action plan is being developed for the Council's corporate social media channels, which is to be finalised shortly.
- 4.2** The plan is broken down into three, six- and 12-month targets, to achieve overall objectives including boosting follower numbers across platforms, hiking up post engagement, continuing to transform content planning and quality, and being positioned to test innovative, and different approaches (including live streaming).
- 4.3** Much like the WCC website, there is concerted, strategic work ongoing to ensure social media does not sit in isolation. A user's full online journey (from social media to website, and beyond) will be increasingly considered

and reflected in cohesive and recognisable content across all digital platforms.

5. Council-wide Digital Projects

- 5.1** The Council has progressed a number of digital projects which intend to improve the customer experience with a new approach to customer services handling. I have provided highlights of projects that have been through the CDSB below:

Access to Services (Children's Services) - eFamilyHub and Multi-Agency Assessment and Referral Form (MAARF)

- 5.2** The eFamilyHub will be a digital portal created to support integrated working in the Council's Family Hubs and will be accessible to practitioners, partner organisations and families. Family Registration, Referrals, Family Plans and Plan Reviews will all be created online and be accessible to any professionals supporting the family, while the family themselves will be able to see their own Family Plan and any meetings to which they have been invited.
- 5.3** Creation of a new Multi-Agency Assessment and Referral Form (MAARF), providing a more accessible and more consistent referral route into Child Social Care and Early Help for external professionals. Integration of the form with Mosaic will also improve data quality and reduce time spent internally on data entry.
- 5.4** Both products will integrate with MyWCC accounts to provide Single Sign On (SSO) authentication. However, accounts will be distinct from those used for other Council services (such as parking permits or refuse collection) because of the sensitivity of the data.
- 5.5** Testing and training on the solution is underway with go-live to key users in the coming weeks. Access to eFamilyHub will be rolled out incrementally to families and partner agencies over the following weeks after go-live.

Active Westminster

- 5.6** The Active Westminster website will be revamped in the coming weeks with Book and Pay elements, enabled with Active Westminster discounts in Spring 2020.
- 5.7** Meanwhile, design work has progressed on the integration of the Active Westminster membership with the MyWCC account. Once deployed in Spring, this will allow customers to apply online for membership, potentially using a link to their online Council Tax record to automatically validate their

entitlement. We intend to implement this online application alongside the deployment of a digital card, thus removing the need for someone to keep a physical membership card on their person.

Customer Single Sign On (SSO) and Interface for Hope

- 5.8** This project follows on from the implementation of an online self-assessment form for customers who wish to complete a housing advice request and use a portal for continued access to the request. This service is accessed via the MyWCC account on our website. Furthermore, the solution will enhance the customer journey and user experience by allowing a single set of credentials to be used.

Libraries Volunteer Management System

- 5.9** The publication in April 2019 of the 'Connecting Libraries' review, identified the importance of the voluntary service in achieving the aims of the service moving forward. This project is the first small step in changing our Bi-Borough Library service, with a further programme of work being developed for approval early in the coming weeks.
- 5.10** The Bi-Borough Library service have previously been managing external volunteers through data population of excel spreadsheets and processing of paper applications. With the use of volunteers becoming a growth area for the business, current processes are outdated. There are currently over 450 volunteers across the Bi-Borough Library service.
- 5.11** 'Better Impact' will provide the solution, which is both secure and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant. The system is expected to go-live in the coming weeks and will enable and empower volunteers to take direct responsibility for recording hours and activities.

Lisson Grove Server Migration

- 5.12** In support of our strategic evolution towards Cloud-based services, we will replace our on-premise servers at Lisson Grove with cloud-based Azure servers.
- 5.13** Cloudreach will lead on the implementation of the Azure servers, whilst providing guidance to our IT Infrastructure Team. Once the Azure environment is in place, we will update the Netloan and OneLog applications as well as deploying the 'next generation' of multi-functional self-service kiosks. This is expected to go-live in the coming weeks.

Live Streaming Planning Committees

- 5.14 The installation of new equipment and cloud services to enable live streaming and archive viewing of Planning Committee meetings, linked to Committee papers, establishes corporate capability for potential reuse for other Committee meetings.
- 5.15 The technology has been delivered; with officers currently testing, training and undergoing final configuration activities with a proposed go-live date in the coming weeks.

Mobile Working

- 5.16 This project will implement changes that will allow Council officers across a range of services to receive tasks, inspect and update cases on site using mobile capability. In doing so, this will reduce the administrative burden on officers, increasing productivity whilst improving service delivery.
- 5.17 The services include as part of this project are: Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs); Noise (Noise complaints; Smoke and Pollution); Health and Safety; Environmental Health; Environmental Sciences; Highways Licensing; Environmental Health Consultations; Residential; Food; City Inspectors and Trading Standards. This will be achieved via the deployment of handheld mobile devices and the use of Dynamic Resource Scheduling (DRS).
- 5.18 The contract to provide the solution has being awarded to Kirona. Kirona will deploy their application into the cloud and inter-connect to WCC via Virtual Private Network (VPN).
- 5.19 Each of the over 200 street-based operatives will be equipped with a handheld mobile device. The device will allow a user to process a case using only the mobile device, with no need to return to a Council office. DRS will ensure operatives are efficiently assigned tasks, based not just on skills sets, but their actual real-time locations.
- 5.20 The first deployment of handheld mobile devices and the use of DRS will be for the FPNs service, expected in February 2020.

Review of Evolve

- 5.21 The aim of the Evolve project is to replace the evolve form designer with the Dynamics 365 (D365) out of the box capabilities due to technical difficulties and problems with the supplier. Evolve provides the capability to create web-based forms that allow customers to report or request various services from pot holes to a missed bin collection.

- 5.22** The Evolve platform was implemented in January 2018 by Pythagoras as a form builder/account portal function interacting with D365. Its implementation was challenging with the resulting set of forms delivering a poor user experience and generating significant negative feedback from both internal and external stakeholders.
- 5.23** As part of the review of Evolve, in Phase One, the FixMyStreet (FMS) solution replaced many of the forms in August 2019. It also reduced the dependency on Evolve and is more cost effective.
- 5.24** Recently, as part of Phase Two of this project, all internal Evolve forms used by our Agilisys Contact Centres were replaced with D365 forms in late November 2019. This was followed by Drop One on Monday 2 December 2019. Drop One replaced all public-facing Evolve forms, including Noise, Food Safety, Recycling Bags, with D365 forms.
- 5.25** There has been a delay from the Idox team to direct the Planning Application form from 'Identity Server' to 'Active Directory Business-to-Consumer (B2C)', however this has not prevented user accessibility. We are therefore going to keep one component of Evolve running until the end of January 2020 to allow the Idox Team to complete the work.

6. Contact Centres

- 6.1** Since my last report to the Committee, I have now included a breakdown on Contact Centre performance (see Figure 1). This will be built upon over the coming months to give a more comprehensive view of performance.

Figure 1: Contact Centre Performance (November 2019)

	Volume of Calls Answered November 2019 (+/- since last month)	Percentage of Calls Answered November 2019 (+/- since last month)	Target Calls Answered	Average Wait Times November 2019 (+/- since last month)	Target Wait Time	Average Handle Time November 2019 (+/- since last month)	Target Handle Time
Agilisys (in-hours)	18,606 (+ 0.04%)	96.60 (+ 0.40%)	95%	28 secs (+ 1 sec)	No target	4 mins 45 secs (- 27.3 secs)	No target
Agilisys (out-hours)	5,915 (+ 9.7%)	95.6% (- 2.2%)	95%	22 secs (- 12 secs)	No target	4 mins 13 secs (- 3 secs)	No target
Capita	17,166 (- 14%)	98% (+ 0.02%)	84% (+ 5.7%)	-	-	-	No target
Westminster Housing	18,417 (- 18%)	89% (- 6%)	92%	137 secs (+ 88 secs)	70% (in 30 secs)	8 mins 57 secs (- 15 secs)	No target
Parking (NSL)	13169 (- 859)	97.44% (+ 2.35%)	80% (in 30 secs)	22.24 secs (-15.08 secs)	0.12 secs	4 mins 56 secs (+ 28 secs)	No target
Housing Solutions (RMG)	5,466 (+ 15%)	93% (+ 23.5%)	89% (KPI is calls resolved, not answered)	1 min 2 secs (- 3 mins 26 secs)	No target	3 mins 41 secs (- 1 min 12 secs)	No target

Agilisys (In and Out of Hours)

6.2 In our Agilisys (in and out of hours) contact centres, our service levels are being met and both contact centres are performing well. Since November 2019, both in and out of hours Agilisys contact centres have been performing above target in terms of percentage of calls answered.

6.3 The replacement of the Evolve forms with the new D365 forms took place on Thursday 28 November. These forms have already made a positive difference to call handling for agents as they are much quicker to complete.

Westminster Housing

6.4 In November, the first phase of contact centre refresher training programme for agents were delivered with the following areas of focus: customer service – active listening, tone of voice and use action language; and knowledge – leasehold system navigation including swordfish, Graphical User Interface (GUI) account, and navigating existing service requests, product knowledge including service charges, major work and lastly roles and responsibilities. In the coming weeks, refresher training will resume with a focus on both empathy and Repairs knowledge.

- 6.5** Whilst the refresher training sessions were underway, percentage of calls answered, and average waiting times were impacted – this was due to a reduction in staff resource. At the same time, the Westminster Housing contact centre also saw a number of internal promotions with staff successful for other roles across Housing. Recruitment is underway to backfill these posts.

Housing Solutions (RMG)

- 6.6** A review of the RMG contact centre is underway following the implementation of the interactive voice response (IVR) in February 2019. The review will look at the impact of the IVR on the number of calls received by the call centre and how they can be better handled to reduce wait times, calls abandoned and improve customer service. It is part of a wider review of the call centre which is due for completion in Spring 2020.
- 6.7** There was a technical issue at the contact centre on Wednesday 23 October, wherein agents could not log on to the call centre system or were dropped off the system. This impacted negatively on the overall stats as only 54% of calls were answered on that day. Within the working day, the technical issue was resolved.

7. Broadband and Connectivity in Westminster

Council Housing Stock

- 7.1** In August 2019, the Council adopted a citywide wayleave approach to broadband for Council stock, with implementation subject to technical approval on a site by site basis. To date, we have connected 6,851 units across Westminster with work underway to install fibre infrastructure at Maida Vale Towers, Townsend, Wellington and Barrow Hill Estate. Once these works are complete, this will result in connectivity to 39% of Council housing stock.

Local Full Fibre Networks

- 7.2** Working alongside several partners and led by Transport for London, we were part of a successful bid for funding from the Local Full Fibre Networks Fund, to connect publicly owned premises across London through use of the tube network. A fibre network will be deployed in the Underground Tube tunnels to selected stations before being connected to public sector buildings.

- 7.3** WCC will be able to support the project through our other initiatives including the coordinated street works programme, Connect Westminster scheme, citywide wayleave and the existing dark fibre already in the ground.

Connect Westminster

- 7.4** Connect Westminster is a £2.8m scheme part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, which launched in August 2017. The scheme provides up to £2,000 towards the capital costs of upgrading Small and Medium Enterprises' (SME) broadband connections to superfast levels. The scheme is set to issue vouchers until the end of December 2020 or until the funding runs out.
- 7.5** To date the scheme has allocated just over £1.8m of the allocated funding to 151 registered suppliers to help upgrade their broadband connections to superfast levels across 761 businesses in Westminster.

Digital Street Markets

- 7.6** In November 2018 we applied for further European funding to run the Digital Street Markets Project which will provide free WiFi for all market traders on the Council run markets.
- 7.7** The project will run for three years and will provide WiFi networks at each street market run by WCC for the market traders. Alongside this, a digital skills training programme will also take place to support market traders and SMEs within Westminster to learn and develop the skills needed to make the most use of this new connectivity.
- 7.8** Subject to approval the project is expected to start in January 2020 and end March 2023.

National Gigabit Voucher Scheme

- 7.9** The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is part of the Local Full Fibre Networks programme, which launched nationally in March 2018 offering vouchers worth up to £2,500 to businesses across the UK.
- 7.10** To date the national scheme has delivered 862 vouchers to Westminster businesses totaling £1,734,273. Out of the 862 vouchers awarded, 461 Westminster businesses are now connected to broadband, with the other 401 businesses in the pipeline for connection. There have been 252 residential premises connected as part of this scheme with the other 610 being for businesses.

5G

- 7.11** In 2018, the Council awarded Ontix the Small Cell Concession contract for delivering connectivity through council street assets. Ontix are building 5G ready infrastructure for small cells, including a high capacity yet low latency Metrohaul transmission network to deliver 5G-ready connectivity for all operators. Ontix are also planning to deploy over 100 small cells in and around Trafalgar Square and Victoria during the 2019/20 financial year. This will put WCC at the forefront of small cell deployment.
- 7.12** In addition, Ontix have also recently deployed a point to point wireless solution on Berwick Street. This was a location that has proved difficult to serve by fibre providers due to the active street market. However, numerous small businesses are now in receipt of 300Mbps symmetrical services. This is an approach that will be replicated in hard to serve areas as it is capable of delivering services of up to 1Gbps.



City of Westminster

Communities & Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday 9th January 2020

Classification: General Release / Confidential

Title: Portfolio Update

Report of: Cllr Iain Bott

Cabinet Member Portfolio Councillor Iain Bott, Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community

Wards Involved: All

Report Author and Contact Details: **Chloe Baker x4170**
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1 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, LEISURE AND SPORT (PALS)

ActiveWestminster Awards

- 1.1** The 2019 ActiveWestminster Awards marked the tenth-year anniversary of this event, which was held on 22nd November 2019 at our grand, now Grade II* listed Porchester Hall, which also celebrated its 90th birthday having originally opened in 1929. In previous years the ceremony has been held at Lords Cricket Ground.
- 1.2** The ActiveWestminster awards is the biggest awards ceremony that the council organises and demonstrates the hard work and dedication of all the nominees and how their work is appreciated by the City Council, local residents and communities.
- 1.3** This year saw the highest number of nominations for awards to date. Over 275 nominations were received, but more importantly 122 of these being unique; demonstrating the depth and breadth of the nominations, ranging from residents, local clubs and schools through to ActiveWestminster partners and Westminster-based athletes.
- 1.4** All the 31 finalists have been recognised for the vital role they play in using physical activity, leisure and sport to encourage Westminster residents to get and stay active.
- 1.5** The awards were sponsored by our leisure contractor Everyone Active and partners EcoWorld international. They were hosted by Sky Sports presenter, David

Garrido with special guests former England footballer, Rachel Yankey OBE and Team GB basketball player, Melita Emanuel-Carr who is also a local resident and previous award winner.

- 1.6 The ceremony was attended by c.320 guests, an increase of previous years of c.180-200 guests and featured several performances from local artists the Mangrove Steel Pan band, the Blend Choir, Bollywood dancing from Step Change Studios, freestyle footballer Aguska Mnich and our very own ActiveWestminster team member and singer, Yiannis Chrysanthou.
- 1.7 Winners on the evening were handed their trophies by the Lord Mayor Cllr Ruth Bush. The full list of winners are featured on the council website.

ActiveWestminster Strategy

- 1.8 Our ActiveWestminster strategy 2018-2022 sets out high quality streets, parks and spaces that can and should encourage, facilitate and enable physical activity. These spaces should be flexible and support a range of physical activity, leisure and sport. Through this strategy, we want to focus our attention towards less traditional spaces.
- 1.9 We recognise that everyone's needs, and attitudes are different, and people look for different things from physical activity. The ActiveWestminster strategy encourages people to be physically active where, when and how they choose.
- 1.10 We want to work collaboratively to encourage innovation and will continue to actively promote the fundamental contribution that physical activity, leisure and sport makes to individual physical and mental wellbeing, as well as the additional positive impacts it has upon our economy, community and development of our City.
- 1.11 We are educating front-line staff about the benefits of physical activity, helping them to support our residents to create communities through attractive, supportive and healthier environments, that enable being active by default.
- 1.12 Through our new approach we are aiming to strengthen a culture of physical activity, leisure and sport – including play across our city, our lives and in our neighbourhoods.

OpenActive (ActiveWestminster Digital programme)

- 1.13 Our ActiveWestminster Strategy 2018-2022 sets out our commitment to maximising digital technology to promote timely and relevant physical activity, leisure and sport.
- 1.14 We will continue with the OpenActive initiative to encourage sports organisations to open their data. This will allow us to promote opportunities and activities through public activity finders and our digital platforms.
- 1.15 As a local authority, we felt we should not only be supporting the OpenActive initiative, but purposefully implementing it. We are proud to be an early-adopter of

OpenActive, harnessing open data online to encourage more people to take up physical activity. Both our ActiveWestminster website and app were launched in Beta versions in March 2018.

- 1.16** Officers are already engaged in several actions to take further drive forwards the implementation of OpenActive via our websites and app, working alongside colleagues in other service areas such as IT, Policy, Performance and Communications and Children's Services.
- 1.17** Due to the advanced development of the OpenActive standard, we are also working with our leisure contractor, Everyone Active, to implement the recommended OpenActive standard requirements to ensure continued engagement and longevity for the life-span and beyond our current leisure contract.
- 1.18** We will also look to implement the recommended OpenActive standard requirements for delivering OpenActive as part of our Community Use Agreements (CUA's). The use of a CUA secures well-managed and safe community access to sports facilities. They provide certainty and clarity about the intentions concerning community access and cover such matters as hours of availability, management arrangements, pricing policy etc. We also usually make a CUA a planning condition for sports facilities. This implementation would influence existing CUA site's and ensure that any new CUA sites such would include OpenActive by default.

'No Ball Games' & The City Plan

- 1.19** As part of our ambitious ActiveWestminster strategy, we are making progress with our work removing prohibitive signage. Removing restrictive signage and bylaws such as 'No Ball Games' will allow for more supportive and permissive environments for physical activity wherever possible and appropriate.
- 1.20** Additionally, through our new City Plan 2040, we will look to ensure that planning guidance and principles, build in physical activity and becomes the preferred choice; particularly for our children, young people and families
- 1.21** Officers are already engaged in several actions to take the 'No Ball Games' policy forward, working alongside colleagues from other service areas, such as Parks and Open Spaces, Housing, Public Health and Children's Services.
- 1.22** The Council believes that participation in physical activity, leisure and sport can be truly transformative, inclusive and inherently positive. We are making great progress in turning that belief into something tangible.
- 1.23** Through our new approach we are aiming to strengthen a culture of physical activity, leisure and sport – including play across our city, our lives and in our neighbourhoods. We will do this by;
 - Removing current restrictive signage and bylaws such as 'No Ball Games' and 'No Cycling' etc. to create a more permissive and supportive environment for physical activity, leisure and sport – including play

- Ask our residents and communities to inform us where we currently have restrictive signage and byelaws such as ‘No Ball Games’ and ‘No Cycling’ etc, so that we can log and remove these
- No longer implement restrictive signage and byelaws such as ‘No Ball Games’ and ‘No Cycling’ etc.
- Educating front line staff about the benefits of physical activity, leisure and sport – including play, helping them to support our residents to create communities through attractive, supportive and healthier environments that enables being active by default
- Encourage our Registered Social Landlord (RSL’s) to adopt our policy

1.24 Additionally, through our draft new [City Plan 2040](#) being taken forward by the Cabinet Member for Place Shaping and Planning, we are developing a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) and finalising the Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP), which will also highlight the work on the ‘No Ball Games’ policy

ActiveStreets

1.25 The Council’s ActiveStreets programme is a key commitment of the Council’s Active Westminster Strategy, as well as being part of our Biodiversity and Open Spaces Strategy. The programme consists of 3 types of Active Street:

- **Play Streets:** a permanent designated street which provides priority over traffic to children and families to play in streets at specified times. This is underpinned by Department for Transport legislation (Section 29, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984).
- **Street Play:** facilitated by temporary road closures (Section 16a, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984) for children and families to play in streets at specified days, times and locations. Officers are developing a policy that makes the process of applying for ‘Street Play’ as simple and as affordable (ideally, free) as possible.
- **School streets:** provided either via permanent or temporary road closures for school children to play in the streets outside the school at specified days and times.

1.26 ActiveStreets create a more permissive and supportive environment for children, young people and families to enjoy being outside and getting active. This programme provides easier access to physical activity, play and sport opportunities, encouraging our neighbourhoods to not only keep active, but encourage communities to come together and get to know their neighbours.

1.27 Both ‘School Street’ and ‘Play Street’ involved working closely with schools, colleagues, developers and local residents, contributing to the success of the

project and changing many lives for the better, creating the City for All vision of 'Healthier and Greener City.'

1.28 This programme will also contribute to the Council's commitment to improving air quality in local environments, by encouraging residents to take up more active travel.

1.29 Through our new City Plan, we will look to ensure that planning guidance and principles build in physical activity and become the preferred choice for our children, young people and families.

1.30 On the 23rd August 2019 we formally launched our overall ActiveStreets programme at our 'Play Street' at Fisherton/Luton Street (which coincided with DfT publishing their updated guidance on 'Street Play'). Our launch included;

- The signing of the Car Free Day Pledge by the Lord Mayor of Westminster & Cllr Tim Mitchell, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and City Management.
- Following the launch, we actively encouraged local organisations and residents to apply to hold 'Street Play' sessions/activities for Car Free Day on 22 Sept, an initiative backed by the Mayor of London and London Play.
- Residents made applications for Car Free Day - 'Street Play' sessions/activities at;
 - Droop Street (1)
 - Radnor Mews (9)

However, these sessions/activities did not proceed as the applicants advised that they had insufficient the 'StreetMakers' (stewards/parents/volunteers).

- Additional, Car Free Day events were held at;
 - Regent Street
 - Connaught Street
- [Activities were also held](#) at our permanent 'Play Street' at Luton/Fisherton Street
- These events were publicised by the [Mayor of London](#), TfL & [Car Free Day](#)

1.31 Following Car Free Day 2019;

- Working out the environmental impact of a Car Free Day is difficult because air pollution is influenced by the weather as well as by emissions. However, a temporary air-quality monitoring site in Regent Street measured a decrease of 60% compared with the day before.
- We are working towards the opening for general applications for 'Street Play' sessions in the coming weeks, subject to formal adoption of our draft 'Street Play' policy by Spring 2020, which will enable and facilitate

residents/community organisations to apply all-year round to hold 'Street Play' sessions/activities.

- We have an emerging strategic partnership developing with London Marathon Events / London Marathon Charitable Trust, which includes further support to our overall ActiveStreets Programme.

Dance Westminster

- 1.32** Dance Westminster is an opportunity to promote active lives among young adults with disabilities and for Westminster to champion a creative, positive initiative that supports participation and inclusion through physical activity. The proposal is designed to allow for Dance Westminster to become an annual event and provides an option for creating tools that will enable carers/ teachers to support people to be active through dance and movement.
- 1.33** This brand-new programme of activity ran for 6-7 weeks, having started in December 2019 and will conclude with a celebratory Gala Final in January. Across the workshop and audition days, the aim was to identify 10 promising dancers who will receive 6 weeks of training to prepare them for the final gala.
- 1.34** It is hoped that c.100 participants in total will attend from across the ActiveWestminster North, Central and South networks of the Borough.
- 1.35** The programme started with three fun, general active dance workshops, with options for both seated and standing participants. Following these workshops, participants were then invited to perform a learned routine in front of a panel and an audience of family and friends.
- 1.36** Our first workshop had 17 participants ranging from 16 – 79 and was attended by BBC's Strictly Come Dancing, spin-off show 'It Takes Two' and this year's Strictly contestant and Paralympian Will Bayley. This indent was shown on BBC Two on Wednesday 10th Dec 2019. Will has also offered to be a judge at the final gala in January.
- 1.37** The year's final gala is due to take place on 23 January 2020 at Porchester Hall.
- 1.38** As part of the Dance Westminster legacy, PALS will also be setting up a new disability dance programme at an Everyone Active centre in each of the three networks for all participants who did not get selected for the final.
- 1.39** Officers have spoken to Para Dance UK to see if they would like to collaborate. They have offered to help with the legacy programmes that we plan to run across the three networks.

Sport for Confidence (SfC)

- 1.40** Sport for Confidence has been operating specifically at Moberly so far for the last six months and has recently expanded to Seymour Leisure Centre. The programme supports people who face barriers to participation to get involved in a

variety of sporting activities in mainstream settings. SfC places Occupational therapists and Sports Coaches alongside each other to ensure truly inclusive sport and leisure opportunities.

- 1.41** Residents have been able to access a variety of weekly sessions across two days at Moberly Leisure Centre and now a third day at the Seymour Leisure Centre. Within 9 months in the borough, we hope to expand SfC in the south of the borough, at Queen Mother Sports Centre.
- 1.42** The service has also provided numerous tasters and regular engagements with several other services, such as Mencap, OneWestminster and Carer's Network. Working closely with PALS and Everyone Active they have promoted their inclusive approach to various networks and groups.

Current membership and usage statistics for Leisure Centres

- 1.43** The tables below show current membership and usage statistics* for the Leisure Centres (statistics provided by the leisure contractor, Everyone Active);

Leisure contract year 3 (July 18 - Jun 19);

Memberships															
Contract Yr 3	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Net Gain	% Gain	
Little Venice	886	867	867	956	1,008	986	1,033	1,065	1,019	1,070	1,125	1,158	272	31%	
Marshall St	2,921	3,011	2,808	2,799	2,999	3,036	3,037	3,042	3,273	3,023	3,298	3,296	375	13%	
Moberly	2,492	2,713	3,126	3,374	3,202	3,496	3,887	4,040	4,181	4,443	4,463	4,405	1,913	77%	
Paddington Rec	1,402	1,392	1,383	1,455	1,465	1,405	1,513	1,545	1,567	1,543	1,550	1,577	175	12%	
Porchester	3,240	3,233	3,198	3,198	3,196	3,058	3,223	3,293	3,193	3,291	3,257	3,216	-	24	-1%
Queen Mother	3,679	3,558	3,710	3,764	3,746	3,533	3,634	3,936	4,155	4,183	3,679	3,880	201	5%	
Seymour	2,499	2,543	2,616	2,695	2,720	2,683	2,809	2,860	2,793	2,950	2,902	2,855	356	14%	
Total CY3	17,119	17,317	17,708	18,241	18,336	18,197	19,136	19,781	20,181	20,503	20,274	20,387	3,268	19%	
Total CY2	14,689	14,519	14,958	15,067	15,591	15,115	16,300	16,770	16,478	15,791	16,085	16,011	1,322	9%	

Usage														
	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total	
Contract Yr 1	183,418	175,081	190,726	192,164	183,802	143,308	209,404	219,443	224,040	219,976	220,429	221,558	2,383,349	
Contract Yr 2	204,637	173,888	221,403	222,565	228,968	177,842	234,557	218,363	222,730	223,717	222,632	215,982	2,567,284	107.7%
Contract Yr 3	215,430	199,025	237,102	238,969	245,216	182,874	259,047	263,097	257,674	244,932	248,462	255,381	2,847,209	110.9%

Contract Year 3	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total
Marshall Street	19,450	19,189	22,732	22,824	22,975	11,674	23,610	22,366	22,274	21,673	21,912	22,227	252,906
Pad Rec - Site Ac	26,435	18,225	26,540	26,528	26,626	23,384	22,254	22,099	22,310	22,460	22,651	27,240	286,752
Pad Rec People	109,447	92,168	108,852	100,612	80,420	60,430	74,096	75,987	114,687	141,411	161,608	163,528	1,283,243
St Augustines	1,732	1,729	1,639	1,753	1,698	1,584	1,610	1,794	1,761	1,797	1,796	1,837	20,730
Porchester	37,686	37,494	46,722	43,204	45,605	38,194	46,592	48,523	50,418	44,642	45,171	45,754	530,005
Queen Mother	51,034	49,819	51,552	51,508	53,435	30,357	59,446	61,275	56,690	55,303	54,312	56,635	631,366
Seymour	33,679	26,692	34,570	35,245	35,349	26,404	34,313	37,652	40,119	37,033	39,249	37,551	417,856
Little Venice	12,536	10,304	12,096	12,918	13,334	9,068	13,010	13,172	13,568	12,271	12,424	12,477	147,178
Moberly	32,878	35,573	41,251	44,989	46,194	42,209	58,212	56,216	50,534	49,753	50,947	51,660	560,416
Total Y3	324,877	291,193	345,954	339,581	325,636	243,304	333,143	339,084	372,361	386,343	410,070	418,909	4,130,451

Lesiure contract year 4 (July 19 - to date);

Memberships													
Contract Yr 4	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Little Venice	1,175	1,222	1,286	1,275	1,308								
Marshall St	3,523	3,223	3,393	3,482	3,476								
Moberly	4,492	4,484	4,634	4,691	4,706								
Paddington Rec	1,605	1,609	1,686	1,777	1,755								
Porchester	3,299	3,315	3,382	3,458	3,490								
Queen Mother	3,890	3,887	3,942	3,802	4,108								
Seymour	2,908	2,915	3,049	3,109	3,259								
Total CY4	20,892	20,655	21,372	21,594	22,102	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total CY3	17,119	17,317	17,708	18,241	18,336	18,197	19,136	19,781	20,181	20,503	20,274	20,387	
Usage													
Contract Yr 1	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total
Contract Yr 1	183,418	175,081	190,726	192,164	183,802	143,308	209,404	219,443	224,040	219,976	220,429	221,558	2,383,349
Contract Yr 2	204,637	173,888	221,403	222,565	228,968	177,842	234,557	218,363	222,730	223,717	222,632	215,982	2,567,284
Contract Yr 3	215,430	199,025	237,102	238,969	245,216	182,874	259,047	263,097	257,674	244,932	248,462	255,381	2,847,209
Contract Yr 4	406,919	355,208	393,235	377,767	257,146								1,213,381
Contract Year 4	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Total
Marshall Street	19,921	20,789	23,259	23,888	23,167								111,024
Pad Rec - Site Ac	27,840	23,594	29,208	30,020	29,685								140,347
Pad Rec - People	161,877	137,165	149,983	127,529	TBC								576,553
St Augustines	1,716	1,662	1,467	1,611	1,887								8,343
Porchester	42,101	34,239	35,529	38,042	42,434								192,345
Queen Mother	57,659	50,023	53,408	54,512	58,410								274,012
Seymour	36,737	30,538	37,559	38,894	38,325								182,053
Little Venice	11,848	9,622	11,632	11,981	12,339								57,422
Moberly	47,220	47,576	51,190	51,290	50,899								248,175
Total Y4	406,919	355,208	393,235	377,767	257,146	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,790,274

*Statistics are revised on a monthly and quarterly basis to ensure accuracy.

2 MAJOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Porchester Centre, Spa and Hall

- 2.1 A listed building consent application for works to Porchester Centre's large/main swimming pool was submitted in September with a decision due shortly.
- 2.2 The new Porchester Spa had an initial re-opening ceremony on 28th November 2019 with public access available from the following day, following an extensive modernisation programme costing in the region of c.£800k.
- 2.3 A lot of very positive feedback regarding the high quality of this refurbishment has been received by the local community and customers.

Seymour Leisure Centre

- 2.4 Council Officers have reviewed several options to scope how best to remodel/refurbish this leisure centre, which will actively facilitate creating space for the new Marylebone library.
- 2.5 The proposals suggesting the raising of the current sports hall to first floor level to allow the original large/main swimming pool area to be brought back into use are currently being discussed and awaiting confirmation. This approach will bring back an original use and create a larger and significantly better swimming provision than

the existing swimming pool which is now past its design life and has a constrained size.

- 2.6** A stakeholder meeting was held on the 26th November with several local groups including the Marylebone Association, St. Marylebone Society and the Marylebone Forum to discuss the best approach to remodelling/refurbishing and modernising Seymour Leisure Centre. Initial plans were presented and received very positive feedback in fully supporting a significant change going forward.
- 2.7** The concept design is currently being amended with further detail to take account of heritage aspects of this Grade II listed building. Proposals will look to protect important heritage aspects of this Grade II listed building as much as possible. This was scheduled for a presentation to the Director of Placeshaping and Town Planning in December.
- 2.8** Sport England have reviewed and provided positive feedback on these plans. In doing, they are supportive of this co-location opportunity and have provided initial design and cost plan advice.
- 2.9** The business case to support this refurbishment investment is being procured with the strategic outcomes being available before Christmas. Alongside this, Sport England are currently identifying the wider leisure benefits of this proposed refurbishment through their own planning modelling process. These findings will be integrated into the business case strategic outcomes, as well as the emerging Built Facilities Strategy (BFS) that is being developed at part of our City Plan 2040.

Jubilee Sports Centre

- 2.10** Phase 2 of the scheme will create a Community Sports Centre and 56 private residential homes. WHIL (Westminster Housing Investment Limited) have had an offer accepted to acquire 19 of these homes. The future use will be at the Council's discretion, but the intention is for these 19 homes be let on a range of rents based on Westminster's intermediate rent bands.
- 2.11** Considerable progress to enable a start on site is being made in negotiations with the Council's development partner, EcoWorld. Heads of Terms to pursue Phase 2 is being recommended for a Cabinet Member decision was signed in December.
- 2.12** Legal documentation to permit the commencement of Phase 2 is being concluded in December to allow a forecasted start to demolition works by February at the latest.

Paddington Recreation Ground (PRG)

- 2.13** Excellent progress has been made at PRG using a combination of capital budget and CIL funding worth c.£1.5m over 3 years. This includes delivering a new community suite, three new sports pitches, a callisthenics area, parkour equipment, sprint track, efficient LED lighting as well as a landscaping and environment area.

- 2.14** Officers are also working with Highways and the Road Safety Team on a cyclopark proposals. As part of this wider project, there is a review of the Paddington Recreation Ground Management Plan being undertaken.
- 2.15** The Community Suite at Paddington Recreation Ground has reached practical completion. The new community suite is now open and allows PRG to offer a range of group exercise classes, including group cycling, as well as soft play and community activities.
- 2.16** A detailed planning application for several new facilities including a MUGA for hockey and football training, a sprint track, a parkour area, a callisthenics area and associated LED lighting was validated in November 2019. A planning decision is due in January 2020 with works set to commence in Spring 2020.

Lisson Green Pitch

- 2.17** The current pitch on the Lisson Green estate is reaching the end of its design life and needs an upgrade. PALS are managing the project on behalf of Westminster Housing services to offer best practice and subject matter expertise. The new pitch investment is a partnership between the Council and the London Marathon Trust, with both parties sharing the cost. A local sports club have a long-term interest in this pitch and would like to be part of the future management of the facility via a Community Use Agreement (CUA).
- 2.18** Our consultants submitted a detailed planning application in November with resident consultation to date signifying strong support for the changes proposed. A planning decision is due in January with works set to commence in Spring 2020.

Wilberforce School Pitch

- 2.19** After a period of detailed public engagement and an adjustment to the location of the MUGA, a detailed planning application has been submitted in November. A planning decision is due in January with works due to commence in Spring 2020.
- 2.20** As several other works are happening at the Wilberforce School such as the refurbishment of the original school and the construction of a new St Marylebone Bridge Special School, a series of quarterly stakeholder meetings are held to co-ordinate activities, timescales and agreed parameters.
- 2.21** To ensure community access to the new facility, a Community Use Agreement (CUA) will be implemented.

Outdoor Adventurous Learning Centre - Sayers Croft

- 2.22** Sayers Croft team are in the process of recruiting three new Outdoor Activity Instructor Apprenticeship roles at Sayers Croft. This Apprenticeship is new, and employer led, designed by the outdoor industry to provide a nationally recognised qualification to trainee Instructors. The first set of three have initially been ringfenced for Westminster residents as we are keen for our visiting schools to have good role models from within their own neighbourhoods. As we continue to

recruit another 5 in the summer, again we will focus our advertising to catch applications from Westminster residents.

3 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS)

Westminster Advice Service Partnership (WASP)

- 3.1 The latest monitoring report submitted for Year 1, Q4 (July-September 2019) shows that the contract continues to progress well, with most areas exceeding their set targets.
- 3.2 During this quarter the contract dealt with 4708 enquiries – with the three main enquiry areas being Benefits 49%, Housing 13% and Debt 10%. As a result, the contractor supported residents to access £970,563.00 in eligible benefits either in claiming new benefits/adjusting the benefits due or supporting residents in appeals.

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Contracts

- 3.3 A review is underway to review the existing Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) contracts, and the investment the council makes in the sector and the support it provides to it. Included in the review is a series of 6 workshops involving colleagues across the sector. The review will support the development of a strategic framework for guiding future procurement and commissioning decisions with the VCS in line with the Council's City for All strategy.

4 CULTURE

Cultural Strategy

- 4.1 The Council's draft Cultural Strategy will go out to formal consultation for 8 weeks from 27 January. The strategy outlines the council's commitment to supporting culture across service delivery and provides a basis for which to advocate for the council's role as a broker and facilitator to enable more Westminster residents to benefit from the cultural opportunities on their doorstep.
- 4.2 The new Cultural Strategy provides a framework for the council to:
 - **Increase access to culture for all**, with a specific focus on reaching residents that encounter physical, social and economic barriers. We will work with local arts partners to increase and promote accessible cultural offers for Westminster residents, as well as seeking ways to promote self-initiated arts participation activities in libraries and other community venues.
 - **Develop health and wellbeing programmes including Out and About** (free arts event tickets for the over-65s) through collaboration with more local cultural partners and deepening relationships with council services (e.g. Families, Public Health, Adult Social Care) and local NHS link workers.

- **Nurture communities through social impact programmes** that harness the power of culture to change lives and build social cohesion. We will work with partners and lever the potential of MyWestminster and other council community funds.
- **Establish a Local Cultural Education Partnership** to increase connections between education providers, cultural institutions and creative employers to maximise existing initiatives such as City Lions and industry weeks. This would increase cultural capital and skills opportunities for young people and improve access to lifelong learning for all.
- **Increase civic engagement by supporting creative placemaking.** We will ensure cultural infrastructure, creative workspaces and resident programmes are integral to planning and regeneration schemes. The quality and impact of City of Sculpture and Green Plaques will improve through collaboration with community and arts partners.

4.3 Engagement activities are planned for informally consulting with residents and cultural and creative sector stakeholders to test out the Cultural Strategy priorities and develop an action plan for cultural delivery in Westminster that will be published as part of the Cultural Strategy 2020-24 in late Spring 2020. This will seek to deliver the ‘thriving communities’ ambitions of the new City for All vision.

4.4 A community/cultural/BIDS stakeholder engagement event will be held at The Photographer’s Gallery in February which will involve action planning breakout groups (25th February). Brett Rogers, TPG Director, will also present there about the new Photographer Quarter public space development off Oxford Street, supported by the Council. Residents will be invited to engage in the online consultation through Citysave website, the Westminster Way e-newsletter, Facebook, social media and library posters/leaflets. In addition, a Cultural Strategy market stall will be held at the 13th Feb Open Forum event to gather feedback and suggestions from residents. A joint discussion forum will take place with City Lions and Youth Council members during the consultation phase.

Cities of Learning

4.5 The council will be submitting a Cities of Learning bid on 12th March 2020 to receive support from the Royal Society of Arts, employers and creative organisations to improve career pathways for 14-24 year olds and lifelong learners through place-based digital badges. This new system would help address persistent access barriers and skills gaps across Westminster. This process will support the council’s work towards Local Cultural Learning Partnership status, which would enable us to take a systemic approach to creating high-quality learning opportunities for young people within Westminster, linking informal and formal provision.

Cultural Events

4.6 Following Westminster Council hosting an event on 12 July as part of the Arts Award Network cluster for North Central London (Camden, Islington, Haringey,

Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea), two larger cultural education events will be held in Westminster locations during Spring 2020. The events are being led by and supported by A New Direction, the organisation funded by the Arts Council to support young people's creativity in London. 'Culture in the Curriculum' will be held at Royal Opera House on 11 February 2020 to explore strategies for enhancing the cultural offer for pupils across the school curriculum. On 28 April, 'Exploring Culture & Community', at the Donmar Warehouse Rehearsal Space will be exploring how young people are benefitting from accessing cultural activities and experiences at a local community level. The events are aimed at local schoolteachers, community, youth and arts organisations.

- 4.7** Since June 2019 the new Community Gallery at Westminster City Hall has made the WCC art and archives collections more accessible to residents and visitors and provide a platform for the council to communicate Westminster Way values relating to diversity and inclusion. The West End Theatre exhibition received 420 visitors during London Open House and several community partners attended the launch of the BAME staff network Black History Month exhibition, which was profiled by BBC London and West End Xtra. The next exhibition will be focused on the history of PRIDE in London as part of the staff network celebration of LGBT+ month.
- 4.8** The Cultural Policy & Projects Officer is working with Business & Enterprise on a breakfast event with WCC Business Unit and UK Screen Alliance to promote best practice and generate more local creative apprenticeships during National Apprenticeships Week on 4 February 2020. Society of London Theatre, Creative and Cultural Skills, Creative Industries Federation and UK Screen Alliance will be participating, and the audience will be creative businesses and cultural institutions.

5 CITY LIONS

- 5.1** City lions is part way through year two of a two project targeting disadvantaged young people aged 13-16. Aiming 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.
- 5.2** After year one's success of engaging over 800 young people in activities and programmes, we have engaged another 135 young people in a range of activities and programmes, the target is to reach 750 young people in year two.
- 5.3** We have been exploring the options for City Lions to go on work experience placements across the Council. Council departments such as Policy, Performance and Communications (PPC), Physical Activity, Leisure and Sport (PALS) and the Registry Service have offered work placements so far.
- 5.4** PALS have been delivering a long-standing and well utilised offer relating to work experience as an integrated and strategic looking approach to work experience that can be replicated across Westminster, which will be looked into in the new year.

6 LIBRARIES

Connecting Libraries

- 6.1** Since Connecting Libraries (the independent advisory board's report) was published in April 2019, officers have been developing a communications plan and starting the engagement process. This will look objectively at what the board recommends, in partnership with residents, library users and stakeholders, and develop a comprehensive response that is about adopting the recommendations wherever feasible, practical or appropriate. Engagement with Members and library staff through workshop sessions on the report's recommendations has already started.
- 6.2** The next steps will be a series of workshops and discussions with colleagues across the council, which have now started. The key focus is the "libraries deliver" element of the report which highlights what libraries can contribute to City for All and corporate priorities. Libraries can help cut costs, connect with residents and help combat social isolation. An external stakeholder engagement workshop is scheduled for January.
- 6.3** These sessions will feed in to a libraries strategy, which when published will form the basis of wider engagement with residents and library users.

Marylebone Library and Seymour Leisure Centre

- 6.4** Proposals for the integration of Marylebone library with a refurbished Seymour Centre are detailed in section 2 of this report. The collocation of library and leisure will provide an opportunity to work in a cross-cutting way to deliver multiple benefits to the community, by providing a combined enhanced health and wellbeing offer focusing on widening participation in activity.
- 6.5** Discussions continue with colleagues in the Physical Activity and Leisure team and with the leisure contractor to develop a wellness approach. The enhanced offer will include a range of services to support physical, emotional, social and mental wellbeing sports and fitness activities, health information and resources, cultural events and activities, signposting, social prescribing and volunteering opportunities to help connect people.

Health and Wellbeing

- 6.6** Libraries have implemented a core health offer, supported by Public Health, to address health inequalities across our communities by providing a range of opportunities for people to make healthy lifestyle choices. This will be achieved through the provision of reliable, evidenced health information and resources in appropriate formats, access to free health services, health and wellbeing events and activities, and support from knowledgeable, informed staff.
- 6.7** As part of Libraries' core health offer, information resources support our communities so that they can better understand and be more involved in their own

health care, simplify their access to health information, and be better equipped to make decisions and choices that help them optimise their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

6.8 All libraries will:

- Promote Reading Well: reliably sourced and researched book lists for health and mental wellbeing produced by The Reading Agency, a national charity which supports reading development. This includes providing Reading Well collections in book and ebook formats through targeted displays to help inform customers, community and support group
- Provide hard copy and digital information on healthy lifestyle choices for adults in line with NHS Live Well priorities
- Promote health and wellbeing books and information that support the government's Prevention Agenda (to keep people living healthy, independent lives free from illness or disability)
- Provide at least one designated iPad linking directly to the NHS website as the preferred point of access for reliable, evidenced digital health information and services, and to the Council's healthy lifestyle provider services
- Provide a designated health and wellbeing area in every library for Reading Well collections, themed health displays, hosting stalls with health and wellbeing partner organisations, and digital health equipment

Summer Reading Challenge

6.9 The Summer Reading Challenge (SRC), now in its 20th year, is a national annual initiative organised by The Reading Agency, part-funded by Arts Council England, and delivered by libraries. It encourages children to visit their local library and read during the summer holiday, which stops children's reading levels dipping during the break. Children are challenged to read at least six books for which they get a certificate and medals. Libraries also run linked events to encourage children to visit the library and participate in the challenge. This year's challenge "Space Chase" was themed on space and aliens.

6.10 The SRC is popular, with over 1600 children signing up, participating and attending events throughout the summer although the number participating in 2019 decreased slightly by 2.5% on last year's figure of 1647. However, Maida Vale and Church Street libraries both increased the number of children joining the challenge, up by 69 and 44 respectively. Officers reported that getting access to primary school assemblies which is the most effective marketing for the SRC is becoming more challenging and are looking into mitigating actions to ensure children and their parents are made more aware of the initiative before next year's challenge.

- 6.11** The completion figures were also down on last year's, with a 6% drop from 753 in 2018 to 709 this year. Some libraries increased the number of children reading at least six books with Maida Vale up from 100 to 115, Paddington from 74 to 81 and Victoria library from 35 to 47. 80% of the children at Victoria that joined went on to complete the challenge, compared to the average ratio of 44%.
- 6.12** Actions have already been identified by library officers to raise awareness of the challenge within schools, via social media and when children and their parents/carers visit the library both before and during the summer and these will be implemented before next year's challenge.
- 6.13** The competition from other activities is squeezing the time available for children to participate. The competition includes other events and activities occurring locally as well as what occupies children at home, such as computer games and social media.
- 6.14** The events programme supporting the SRC is increasing in popularity and will be maintained and developed. Library officers are working with partners to increase the number and range of activities provided for free or at a low cost.
- 6.15** Library officers will also be working with The Reading Agency to develop the SRC, which is being reviewed nationally in any case, so it adapts to meet the local needs of children and families in Westminster.

Co-working Spaces

- 6.16** The workspace pilot offering affordable workspace for creative businesses such as art, fashion, design film and media start-up businesses at a cost of £200 per month on the mezzanine level at Westminster Reference library continues. The offer has been adapted to include desk rental by the day, to test the best usage model for the space. Current fixed desk usage is taken up by two users. A feasibility exercise has started to look at other opportunities across library sites.

EU Settlement Scheme

- 6.17** Support to EU nationals through the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) service continues by offering ID and document scanning verification at Victoria, Charing Cross and Paddington libraries. The service has completed 1,548 appointments for residents and non-residents between June and November 2019.

7 REGISTRATION SERVICE

- 7.1** The Registration Service is responsible for the registration of all births, deaths, stillbirths and civil marriages and partnerships that take place within the boundaries of Westminster, as well as conferring British Citizenship on successful naturalisation applicants. The service issues certificates from and has legal custody of the registers containing these life events since the start of civil registration in 1837.

- 7.2** Each local authority is required by law to register the life events that occur within their district, and each Registration Service is overseen by the General Register Office (GRO), a department within the Home Office.
- 7.3** Over 6000 births and 1600 deaths are registered a year, and the service exceeds the KPI for offering 95% of customers appointments to register a birth within five days and register a death within two days. An out of hours service for deaths is available every day of the year, excepting Christmas Day. Over 3000 residents become British citizens through the registration service each year.
- 7.4** Old Marylebone Town Hall is among the most popular venues in the country for weddings and ceremonies with 3535 ceremonies have taken place since it reopened in January 2018. Ceremonies are available seven days a week, 363 days a year, with up to 26 available on Saturdays. Over 80% of bookings are made by non-Westminster residents.
- 7.5** Ceremonies are also delivered in over 150 licensed venues across Westminster, including Home House, the Ritz hotel and London Zoo. Westminster has the largest number of licensed venues in London, and one of the highest in the country.
- 7.6** The Civil Partnership (Opposite-sex Couples) Regulations 2019 came into force on 2 December, allowing heterosexual couples the ability to form a Civil Partnership. Westminster Registration Service already has its first booking for 4 February 2020 and are dealing with multiple enquiries now the final Parliamentary Orders have been passed.

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Communities and Customer Service Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	9 January 2020
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Draft WCC Cultural Strategy 2020-24
Report of:	Ezra Wallace, Interim Director of Policy and Projects
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Michelle Salerno x5953 msalerno@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of the paper is to invite the committee to give their views on the draft version of the Cultural Strategy 2020-24.

The draft Cultural Strategy 2020-24 resulted from an extensive internal audit of cultural activity facilitated by the council. It has been positioned as part of the council's City for All delivery with a central focus on 'access to culture for all'. We have welcomed the work of the Access for Culture Task Force and all their recommendations will be considered during the consultation period, to inform the final priorities and deliverables in the final version of the Cultural Strategy 2020-24.

The draft Cultural Strategy 2020-24 was considered by Informal Cabinet on 4 November 2019. Their feedback has been incorporated within the current version, prior to the launch of a formal consultation on 27 January 2020 for 8 weeks. We aim to publish the final Cultural Strategy, combined with an additional action plan for 2020-24 in Spring 2020.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

The committee is invited to consider:

- How the draft Cultural Strategy 2020-24 can contribute to the council's priorities?
- The plan for engagement during the consultation period
- How would members of the committee like to contribute to the action plan for 2020-24?

3. Background

The new Cultural Strategy provides a framework for the council to deliver the following priorities:

- **Increase access to culture for all**, with a specific focus on reaching residents that encounter physical, social and economic barriers. We will work with local arts partners to increase and promote accessible cultural offers for Westminster residents, as well as seeking ways to promote self-initiated arts participation activities in libraries and other community venues.
- **Develop health and wellbeing programmes including Out and About** (free arts event tickets for the over-65s) through collaboration with more local cultural partners and deepening relationships with council services (e.g. Families, Public Health, Adult Social Care) and local NHS link workers.
- **Nurture communities through social impact programmes** that harness the power of culture to change lives and build social cohesion. We will work with partners and lever the potential of MyWestminster and other council community funds.
- **Establish a Local Cultural Education Partnership** to increase connections between education providers, cultural institutions and creative employers to maximise existing initiatives such as City Lions and industry weeks. This would increase cultural capital and skills opportunities for young people and improve access to lifelong learning for all.
- **Increase civic engagement by supporting creative placemaking**. We will ensure cultural infrastructure, creative workspaces and resident programmes are integral to planning and regeneration schemes. The quality and impact of City of Sculpture and Green Plaques will improve through collaboration with community and arts partners.

Stakeholder meetings will test the emerging priorities and develop actions in the Cultural Strategy during a formal consultation phase. Engagement events and online consultation will enable the council to create a strategy that can be delivered in partnership with external stakeholders and respond to the cultural wellbeing needs of local residents.

- A community/cultural/BIDS stakeholder engagement event will be held at The Photographer's Gallery in February which will involve action planning

breakout groups (25 February). Brett Rogers, TPG Director, will also present there about the new Photographer Quarter public space development off Oxford Street, supported by the Council. Emily Candler from Exhibition Road Group has agreed to help facilitate the event.

- Residents will be invited to engage in the online consultation through Citysave website, the Westminster Way e-newsletter, Facebook, social media and library posters/leaflets.
- A Cultural Strategy market stall will be held at the 13 Feb Open Forum event to gather feedback and suggestions from residents.
- A joint discussion forum will take place with City Lions and Youth Council members during the consultation phase (2 March).

APPENDICES:

DRAFT Cultural Strategy 2020-24

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DRAFT: Westminster City Council's Cultural Strategy 2020 – 2024

FOREWORD

Culture brings people together, makes people happy and improves health, wellbeing and resilience, as well as firing the creative thinking and problem-solving skills that makes us different from computers and robots. Culture shapes our communities, and then, in turn, our communities collectively and individually shape and share it back again.

In Westminster, we are an amazing world-class destination for cultural and creative activity and the council is completely committed to delivering the excellent local services and policies we need to make our cultural infrastructure prosper; from placemaking initiatives and the evening and night-time economy to outdoor events, festivals and markets.

This refreshed Cultural Strategy for 2020-24 signals our commitment to openness and ongoing dialogue, to be a broker, facilitator and partner; to ensure Westminster remains at the heart of London's diverse arts offer and creative economy, while supporting local residents, of all backgrounds and ages, to take advantage of the vibrant cultural opportunities on their doorstep.

As we now reach out to our partners and residents on our emerging cultural priorities, we are looking to draw on the council's ability to bring people together to share the benefits and social value culture can offer to achieve our vision of a City for All.

I look forward to hearing what culture means to you and finding out what we can achieve together.

Councillor Iain Bott, Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cultural Strategy will set the course to 2024 and demonstrates our commitment to culture as part of a City for All

The value of culture is undeniable. We recognise its contribution to our health and wellbeing, the development of skills and careers, the economy and the places where we live. Westminster City Council already runs successful programmes that deliver in all these areas. However, we can do more, by working more closely with partners, to make sure the positive benefits of culture can be felt by us all.

Focusing on four draft priorities, we want to make sure the great benefit of culture is felt by all those who live, work, and visit Westminster. Defining culture in the broadest sense, the strategy will bring together all forms of culture made and experienced in our city.

We want to use your feedback to develop these main priorities against our City for All vision:

- To ensure wider access and culture for all, we will work with local venues and organisations to make sure more Westminster residents and families can take part in cultural activities, especially people who are least like to engage.
- As we create a healthier and happier city, we will improve Westminster as a place to live, and make more connections between public health and cultural provision to increase opportunities for improving wellbeing.
- To optimise the unique opportunities that being at the heart of the capital provides, we will work with cultural and creative employers to identify and tackle key challenges such as addressing skills gaps.
- As a city that celebrates its thriving and diverse communities, we will continue to find opportunities for creative placemaking, ensuring cultural infrastructure is an important part of our City Plan 2020-40, regeneration and public realm schemes.

INTRODUCTION

We want to celebrate and promote culture and its benefits

The council's City for All vision sets out our hopes to support thriving communities where people are able to enjoy great local facilities and access opportunities to build their lives and careers within a cleaner, greener and safer environment. Culture can make a positive impact on each of these areas and help create an environment that supports our communities to thrive and flourish.

We want to make sure that residents can take full advantage of the vibrant cultural world that is on their doorstep, whether it is for pure enjoyment or pursuing lifelong careers. To support this, we need a more open dialogue with the arts and community sector and demonstrate how we can support and work in partnership with them.

We want the definition of culture and the cultural sector to include everything that Westminster residents, businesses and institutions have to offer. This includes large-scale events, museums and galleries, public art and architecture, festivals and film sets, all of which make Westminster an international destination. It includes the local provision that brings culture to the doorstep of residents, such as community festivals, markets, local arts organisations and charities, and our wonderful libraries, where many of our youngest residents will encounter culture for the very first time. And, of course, our definition includes Westminster's vibrant creative sector, including the film, visual effects, advertising, marketing, design, and video games industries, which continue to bring more and new types of employment and attract investment in our city.

We agree with the Arts Council in their *Shaping the Next Ten Years* consultation paper that local people should be able to have access to and shape the culture around them. We want to make sure that we can support grass-roots performance and production spaces, highlighted in the GLA's recent *Cultural Infrastructure Plan*, to ensure the next generation of creative people have the spaces they need to test out and showcase their talent.

We will work with Creative and Cultural Skills, UK Skills Alliance and Creative Industries Federation to facilitate creative apprenticeships and careers education for Westminster's diverse and dynamic workforce as part of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Creative Careers programme.

VALUE OF CULTURE

The potential of culture to enhance our lives is undeniable

Experiencing and taking part in cultural activity can open us up to new perspectives and people, and change the way we think about the world, and ourselves. Evidence tells us that culture is good for our wellbeing, and can help us to discover new interests, strengths and careers that we had never considered. Art helps us question pressing social issues of the day, from human trafficking to climate change, and the consequences of our consumer culture.

In a world of artificial intelligence and advancing robotics, culture and creativity is one of the important areas that are likely to remain human. According to the World Economic Forum, critical thinking, complex and creative problem-solving and creativity are the top three skills that will survive in the face of automation. Access to cultural activity both through formal and informal settings, will provide our residents with opportunities needed to develop these critical skills.

Culture brings a measurable contribution to central outcomes in Westminster, spanning across four broad themes: access and community cohesion, health and wellbeing, economy and employment, creative placemaking and the public realm. These themes are the main priorities in this new strategy and will guide our current and future work. Understanding the role of culture in these themes will help us embed it into our services and add social value to what we deliver for residents, businesses and visitors.

We support the DCMS Committee's recent report *Changing Lives: the social impact of participation in culture and sport*, which recognises that investing in social impact opportunities to improve criminal justice, education and health outcome are too often missed, or undervalued. At a local level we want to make sure we recognise the unique power of culture to change lives, transform cities and break the cycle of crime.

CULTURE FOR ALL

Ensuring Westminster's amazing cultural offer is open to all residents, businesses and visitors

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Access to culture benefits our quality of life. We want to ensure that everyone in the city has the opportunity and ability to access the Westminster's amazing cultural offer. Engaging in cultural activity brings enjoyment and inspiration and can improve our outlook on life. Evidence tells us that culture – whether visiting a museum, going to the theatre or joining in a class or activity – significantly increases overall life satisfaction¹.

Taking part in culture helps engage people in society and can promote civic behaviours such as voting and volunteering. It can even encourage people to think about other topics such as climate change or road safety, when used as a basis for reflection, education and debate. Culture provides a vital tool for educating and building healthier and happier communities.²

The council already deliver projects that aim to make culture accessible to our residents; our Music Hub provides music education and performance opportunities for Westminster school children and our Westminster City Save scheme offers free or reduced-price access to cultural venues and activities. Our Evening and Night-time Vision will look at fresh ways to engage diverse audiences in Westminster's unique cultural offerings.

Data from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport indicates that certain groups are less likely to use museums, arts and heritage venues and activities. Older people, those in lower socio-economic groups, unemployed, living in social housing, from a BAME background or living with a disability or long-term health condition all have lower levels of participation³. The city is home to some of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods and has comparatively high numbers of groups who are less likely to engage with culture, indicating where we need to focus our efforts.

We want to make sure that all residents can access Westminster's cultural offering and that anyone from any background is aware of the variety of cultural activities in the city; our libraries, as democratic and freely accessible spaces, will play a key role in this. More needs to be done to make sure parents and carers know about these offers so that families can enjoy cultural activities together.

By ensuring culture for all, we can improve the health and wellbeing of residents while strengthening our communities.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Increase benefit for people living in the neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of resident engagement in culture
- Barriers to participation (social, economic and physical) are identified and addressed through support for an inclusive local offer and targeted initiatives
- Residents have an improved awareness of Westminster's amazing cultural offer, including evening and night-time arts experiences
- Communities and residents are supported to deliver their own cultural activities and events in libraries and other community spaces
- Events delivered or supported by the council are good quality, embrace Westminster's diversity, and appeal to residents, Londoners and tourists
- Opportunities for cross-promotion across council services will be pursued to extend the cultural offer to more residents.

CASE STUDY / MY WESTMINSTER DAY

My Westminster Day is our annual community festival hosted by the Leader of the Council at Paddington Recreation Ground. The free festival brings together residents from different backgrounds to take pride in their diverse and vibrant city. The first My Westminster Day was in 2017 with 1,000 visitors, which has since grown to 4,500 attending in 2019.

The event has free live music, dance and food from across the world from local people and organisations. Community and voluntary organisations deliver activities and workshops for all ages including My Westminster themed arts workshops, t-shirt painting with One Westminster volunteers and henna arts with Westminster Bangladeshi Welfare Trust.

My Westminster Day promotes a local and accessible form of culture for the city's neighbourhoods to take part in. The event provides a great opportunity to involve residents, community groups and local businesses and helps people access cultural activity. In 2019, 62% of people said they met someone new at the event and 98% said the event helped them to feel positive about their community.

Lena Choudary-Salter, Director of Mosaic Community Trust, exhibitor at My Westminster Day for the past three years, said "The people who visited Mosaic's marquees felt uplifted and proud to identify themselves as part of Westminster and its rich diversity of culture. The event gave us – the BAME groups – a unique opportunity to showcase our own positive contributions to My Westminster's ethos."

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Helping culture to improve the health and wellbeing of residents and to strengthen our communities

Why it's important

Engagement in arts and culture can help recovery from illness, keep us healthy and address major health and wellbeing challenges, such as mental health, isolation and ageing, all of which improves the lives of our residents. A report by our Health and Wellbeing Centres task group found that using the city's assets, including national and local arts organisations, offered the potential to improve the overall maintenance of good health, and contribute to building strong communities. Around 20% of GP visits are made for non-medical reasons⁴, such as loneliness, and arts-based therapies have been shown to be effective in treating stress and mental health issues. In general, those who take part in arts and culture are more likely to report good health and increased life satisfaction.

Using initiatives such as social prescribing, whereby activities such as visiting art galleries and museums are 'prescribed' instead of medication, reduces GP and hospital visits and the use of medication. It has even been estimated to save short-term costs due to drops in GP consultation rates per year and long-term costs as longer lives are lived more healthily.

Engagement in cultural activities reduces the risk of social isolation of which older people are at particular risk. Isolation has serious health implications including depression, dementia, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease, as well as impacting quality of life and overall wellbeing⁵. Westminster has a higher than national average over-65 population, with a high or very high risk of loneliness for older residents. It may be less well-known that 16-24 year olds are the most likely group to identify as feeling lonely, indicating where we may need to extend provision⁶. By targeting cultural activity at those most at risk, we can tackle some of our most important health issues and provide more positive health outcomes for our residents, as well as savings to our health services.

We are currently helping to prevent loneliness through initiatives such as Out and About, which provides free tickets to cultural activities, such as concerts and theatre performances to any resident over 65. Other council-supported initiatives such as Silver Sundays offer important opportunities for older people to try something new and meet new people, while visiting cultural venues such as the English National Ballet.

Our libraries attract people from a wide range of backgrounds and can play an important role in social prescribing and community referrals. They provide access to lots of cultural activities - from dance classes to jewellery making - which can have a positive impact on individual wellbeing and resilience, especially for people feeling lonely, isolated or living with poor health.

Engaging in culture can increase community cohesion, promote civic participation, make communities feel safer and stronger and even play a role in tackling crime. Research shows a strong link between participation, culture and volunteering, particularly amongst younger people; with volunteering improving people's sense of belonging and engagement in their local area⁷. Using culture will improve community cohesion and will empower Westminster residents to feel safer and more engaged with their local community.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- The social impact of culture is recognised and able to shape and influence council activity designed to help communities thrive
- Support for programmes targeting those less likely to take part in culture, such as older adults at risk of loneliness, and young people not in education, employment or training
- Libraries and wider council services combine with partners to take a strategic approach to engaging audiences in cultural activities which improve health and wellbeing
- Council grant funds such as ward budgets invest in cultural and wellbeing outcomes
- Learn from best practice cultural projects that tackle crime and anti-social behaviours
- Commitment to cultural projects that promote active engagement in civic society such as volunteering

CASE STUDY/ WESTMINSTER SINGS

Westminster Sings brings together several projects that promote the health and wellbeing benefits of choirs, and which support new and existing choirs to reach more residents.

Six new community choirs have been established, one of which specifically focuses on improving mental health. The programme includes grants which have gone towards start-up costs for each of the choirs, such as marketing and venue hire costs, and in some cases specialised mental health training. The choirs were formed with the help of community champions throughout several wards, with our most deprived wards such as Westbourne and Harrow Road being prioritised.

At a performance celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Abbey Centre, members of our Churchill Gardens & Tachbrook Community Champion Choirs said that “the singing brings happiness and relaxation” and noted the importance

of “meeting local residents in a friendly environment”, they agreed singing is a good way to help with social and mental health issues.

CASE STUDY/ Look Ahead

During Spring 2019, the council facilitated a trial programme of cultural activities at a social service centre for some of Westminster’s most vulnerable people. Edward Alsop Court (EAC) is a 24-hour, 79-bed, accommodation service managed by Look Ahead Care. It provides support for older homeless men who have complex needs.

Many clients at EAC presented challenging behaviours both for service staff and the neighbouring community. To promote personal wellbeing and positive social experiences a 16-week programme of 72 activities was developed which offered art therapy, music, photography, creative writing, cooking, alongside a range of sports activities including fishing.

Peer Support Volunteers (PSV), who had personal experience of homelessness and drug and alcohol dependence, were selected to become Activity Coordinators. One PSV, who later moved from running the programme into full-time employment, commented: “the mentality of the customers seems to have changed from a sentiment of ‘nothing ever happens around here!’ to a more inclusive, ‘things are happening, what can we do next?’.”

The reduction in local complaints and incidents during the programme was staggering. There was a 98% fall in complaints compared to the 16-week period before the trial, and aggressive and anti-social behaviour incidents fell by 54% and 49% respectively. This had a flow on impact, relieving pressure on ambulance and police call out services. Look Ahead is now seeking to deliver similar programmes more widely on an ongoing basis.

SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Supporting a thriving creative economy and opening up career opportunities for residents

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

There are over 100,000 creative and cultural jobs in Westminster, which make up 15% of all jobs in the city. This is three times more than in London as a whole. Westminster employs more people in every cultural or creative sector than any other London borough⁸.

There are many ways the council supports its vibrant culture sector, including the Westminster Culture Network, which has offered networking opportunities for the past 11 years. Our City Promotions, Events and Filming team facilitate large-scale events such as London Film Festival outdoor screenings in Embankment Gardens. We have funded the development of affordable creative enterprise spaces and artist studios including those at Somerset House and we are supporting five more new spaces that will be launched by 2022. There are further opportunities for us to help create the conditions for the sector to thrive and develop in a challenging economic climate.

Supporting the cultural sector provides many positive benefits, from creating jobs and developing skills, to attracting visitors and improving the view of Westminster as a place to do business. Not only are the creative industries the most resilient to automation, nationally the sector is currently worth over £100 billion and is growing at twice the rate of the rest of the economy⁹.

Many of the challenges facing the sector are like those in other industries: the need for affordable workspace, access to high-speed internet, business advice and support, the need for a talented and skilled workforce and access to capital, markets and networks. Concerns about the lack of good-quality labour, which slows down productivity and affects the long-term potential of the sector, are particularly true for the cultural sector. Businesses are uncertain about the effect of the UK's changing relationship with the European Union and what the future international opportunities might be for Westminster, as a global centre of excellence in cultural and creative industries.

Because of these challenges, it's important to foster new talent to help the cultural and creative sectors continue to develop and bridge the skills gap. With fewer students taking arts and creative subjects in schools, it is important that children and young people are exposed to opportunities in this vibrant sector, so they can consider creative careers.

Cultural education can also bring additional value; research has shown that participation in structured arts activities can increase cognitive ability by 17%. Direct links have also been found with employment; the employability of students who study arts-based subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment than those who do not¹⁰.

By supporting emerging talent in the creative and cultural economy, we can ensure Westminster continues to be at the forefront of cultural and creative inward investment, benefiting our businesses and residents alike.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Young people and schools are connected to cultural opportunities and meaningful work experiences
- The council provides or facilitates infrastructure and services to create an attractive and effective operating environment for cultural and creative businesses and organisations
- The council brokers affordable workspace for the cultural and creative sector to support existing businesses and attract new ones
- Learning and skills development for residents improves their access to lifelong cultural careers and helps to fill skills gaps
- Westminster is promoted regionally, nationally and internationally as a cultural and creative destination, supporting cultural spending and its positive externalities
- Culture underpins wider council policies supporting thriving formal and informal culture such as street entertainment, the evening and night-time economy, and our city-wide Market Strategy.

CASE STUDY/ Westminster Enterprise Space Network

The Westminster Enterprise Space Network was launched in October 2019 as the council's first ever workspace provider network. The network seeks to bring together members of the workspace provider community, in order to: (a) Strengthen, enhance and grow the flexible workspace industry in the City of Westminster (b) to ensure the delivery of proactive, meaningful business support within enterprise spaces to enable small businesses to survive, grow and thrive in the City of Westminster and (c) to ensure that opportunities are generated for local residents and the communities to benefit from within Westminster.

To date the network has 29 different organisations who have joined as members, who between them operate a total of 60 enterprise spaces in the borough. There are an estimated 1500 businesses occupying these enterprise spaces who are being supported by this network. The network boasts an abundance in diversity of types of spaces, including, coworking spaces, serviced offices, artist studios, makers spaces, accelerators and catering spaces. Enterprise space is defined as workspace which is affordable, offering flexible tenures (1-12 months), encourages peer support and collaboration opportunities, provides a proactive business support offer, and generates

opportunities to support local residents. If workspace operators are already undertaking these commitments or are willing to demonstrate that they will, they are then able to sign up to the network via an MoU agreement. The network is free, and is not legally or contractually binding and is part of a light touch business support programme.

CASE STUDY/ CITY LIONS

Despite a vast selection of institutions to discover, and rich and rewarding career opportunities available, many young people lack the means or connections to explore this extraordinary offer themselves.

In response, the council developed City Lions, a targeted programme for 13-16-year-olds which aims to connect young people with the creative sector to explore opportunities available to them in this growing sector.

In its first year City Lions gave over 800 young people a taste of the creative world and guidance on how to start a career within it. Participants accessed work experience, behind-the-scenes and workshop opportunities with Somerset House, Society of London Theatres, London Transport Museum, Wigmore Hall and the Exhibition Road Group, among others.

Creative employers are partnering with City Lions to improve their reputation within their local communities, address skills gaps, develop talent and engage with those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Making sure culture is embedded in our public spaces, supporting residents to engage in and benefit from the impacts of regeneration

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Culture improves spaces and can develop local ownership of places. Regeneration, both in the physical and economic sense, can offer better homes, improved infrastructure, provide a boost to the local economy and many other benefits. Urban regeneration programmes can provoke concerns about the possibility of local areas losing their unique character, with residents and businesses raising concerns of being overlooked or forced out.

It's important that the council involves residents and businesses in regeneration plans, and actively supports them to reap the benefits: it's not enough to assume that benefits will flow to local people without any action. Culture can provide a useful method of engaging communities, preserving their local character and improving the benefits of regeneration. Cultural and creative activity needs to be brought into broader regeneration and economic development plans to have real, measurable benefits.

New cultural venues and creative business space can be created, the public realm can be enhanced through design and public art, and local communities can benefit from participating in events and festivals. Art and culture in public spaces should not just be about making an area more appealing, but also about the social cohesion and identity of a neighbourhood. Our public realm programmes such as Green Plaques and City of Sculpture celebrate local cultural stories, and we are committed to increasing local relevance and wider input from the community as these programmes develop.

We have several emerging place plans across Westminster in which culture is paramount. A new cultural quarter forms the heart of plans for Church Street, and innovative plans for the Strand-Aldwych and Northbank areas will see culture hardwired into the public space. Oxford Street regeneration will promote good-quality opportunities for live music, and cultural experiences that enhance day, evening and night-time economies. In turn, culture and creativity will attract new business and investment to an area to support its regeneration.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Culture is used to actively engage residents in placemaking, and to encourage local involvement and ownership
- The council partners with local organisations to develop place-based approaches to cultural activity
- Local identities, cultural assets and activities are used to promote areas to visitors, businesses and investors

- We work with Neighbourhood Forums and Community Champions to ensure local opinions are reflected and promoted
- The council's planning policies and City Plan 2020-2040 implementation will support culture by protecting existing arts, cultural and community facilities, and by promoting an enhanced cultural offer
- The unique character and heritage of neighbourhoods are conserved, enhanced and promoted e.g. Soho

CASE STUDY/ CREATE CHURCH STREET

The Create Church Street project encouraged arts and culture in the Church Street ward to involve residents in a large-scale regeneration scheme. The project awarded small grants, totalling £200,000, to organisations and individuals to deliver creative activities to benefit local people of all ages and backgrounds. The project has encouraged residents to build a sense of ownership and pride in the area, bringing people from all backgrounds together, as Church Street goes through a process of great change.

The fund has proved highly popular with the local community, funding a total of 29 projects. The programme has helped to foster productive relationships between artists, arts and local organisations, given young people a voice, showcased local artists and introduced residents to new creative opportunities.

Working closely with local gallery The Showroom increased the schemes applications by 19%, demonstrating the value of local partnerships. More generally, the project shows how culture can be used successfully to celebrate local communities, helping them to feel involved and engaged in matters that affect them, whilst developing trust between the council and communities.

CASE STUDY/ WEST END LIVE

Since 2004, Westminster City Council has hosted West End LIVE in Trafalgar Square. In partnership with the Society of London Theatre, the event showcases free performances from the most popular musicals in the West End. The annual weekend-long programme promotes the West End as a world-class destination for culture and theatre as well as promoting Westminster's cultural offer to an international audience.

The event attracts huge audiences, with Trafalgar Square quickly reaching its maximum capacity and allowing almost 120,000 people to enjoy the performances over the weekend. In 2019, over 30 different theatre productions were showcased.

The event drives footfall into the West End, subsequently providing a boost in ticket sales for participating shows. Almost 70% of visitors to West End LIVE said they would not have come to this part of London if it were not for West End LIVE, generating a net gain of £4.5m to the local economy.

West End LIVE is one of Westminster's true highlights, loved by audiences, theatres, and local businesses alike.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Following feedback from partners and residents on our draft Cultural Strategy, we will develop an action plan, and ways to measuring this to show how we are doing. We welcome your thoughts on:

- **what the council might deliver**
- **anything we have missed**
- **how you can help us deliver the strategy.**

Culture for All

- Work with all our residents to design the council's cultural offer
- Work with more local venues and organisations to increase the number of cultural offers for Westminster residents
- Make sure all residents know about the local cultural offer through all our communication channels including website, social media and newsletters
- Support residents to deliver their own cultural activities and events in libraries and other community spaces

Resilient Communities

- Make sure cultural activity is targeted at residents that are least likely to access it, including people experiencing health issues and loneliness
- Use evidence of health and wellbeing outcomes associated with culture across the council to integrate cultural activity into a greater number of our services
- Collaborate with local NHS link workers and primary care providers to develop a joint approach to promoting wellbeing in Westminster
- Support for programmes that employ culture to improve the lives of young people and other groups who are at risk

Skills for the Future

- Develop talent pipelines for the creative sector by making stronger links between the sector, schools and further education by supporting programmes such as City Lions
- Encourage dialogue with cultural and creative employers to address key challenges, for instance around skills and careers

- Improve cultural education opportunities for young people in Westminster through creation of a borough-wide Local Cultural Education Partnership
- Support affordable creative workspaces and create more links with council Business Unit services

Creative Placemaking

- Ensure both grass-roots and institution-led culture is at the heart of our regeneration schemes, such as Church Street, Oxford Street District and Strand-Aldwych
- Continue to promote our community public realm programmes, such as our Green Plaque scheme, to highlight local places and identities
- Improve the quality and impact of City of Sculpture art works in public and community settings by working with partners and sponsors
- Support the council's City Plan aspiration to champion culture through protecting existing arts, cultural and community facilities

RELATED COUNCIL STRATEGIES

- City for All
- Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Active Westminster
- West End Partnership Vision
- Street Entertainment Policy
- Licensing Policy
- City Plan 2019-2020
- Markets Strategy
- Greener City Action Plan 2015-2025
- Events & Filming Strategy*
- Open Spaces & Biodiversity Strategy*
- Dementia Strategy*
- Evening and Night-Time Strategy*
- Economic Opportunity Strategy*

* In development at time of publishing

REPORTS

- Community Cohesion Report
- Armed Forces Community Covenant
- Libraries Advisory Board Report
- Health and Wellbeing Centres Task Group Report
- Access to Culture Task Group Report

KEY PUBLICATIONS AND SOURCES CONSULTED

- Creative health: the arts for health and wellbeing, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing 2017, artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk/appg-inquiry/Publications/Creative_Health_Inquiry_Report_2017_-_Second_Edition.pdf (1 & 5)
- Changing Lives: the social impact of participation in culture and sport, DCMS, 2019 publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcumeds/734/73402.htm (2)
- Social Prescribing, GLA 2017, london.gov.uk/what-we-do/health/social-prescribing (3 & 4)
- The Loneliness Experiment: a national survey led by University of Manchester and BBC seed.manchester.ac.uk/education/research/bbc-loneliness-experiment (6)
- The value of arts and culture to people and society, Arts Council England 2014,

- arts council.org.uk/sites/default/files/infographics/Evidence_review_Infographic_March_2014.jpg** (7)
- UK Business Register and Employment Survey: 2017 Results, Office for National Statistics (8)
 - Britain's creative industries break the £100 billion barrier, DCMS 2018, **gov.uk/government/news/britains-creative-industries-break-the-100-billion-barrier** (9)
 - The case for cultural learning, Cultural Learning Alliance 2017, **culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CLA-key-findings-2017.pdf** (10)
 - Visitor Attraction Trends in England 2017, Visit England, **visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/Documents-Library/documents/England-documents/vva_2017_trends_in_england.pdf**
 - Contribution of the arts and culture industry to the national economy, Arts Council England 2015, **arts council.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Arts_culture_contribution_to_economy_report_July_2015.pdf**
 - Cultural Tourism Vision for London, GLA 2015, **london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cultural_tourism_vision_for_london_low_res_version.pdf**
 - Taking part survey, DCMS, **gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey**
 - 10 skills for the rise of automation, World Economic Forum 2018, **weforum.org/agenda/2018/07/the-skills-needed-to-survive-the-robot-invasion-of-the-workplace**
 - 2018 Snapshot, Visit Britain, visitbritain.org/2018-snapshot
 - Culture for All Londoners: Mayor of London's Culture Strategy, 2018, **london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_culture_strategy_final_0.pdf**
 - Cultural Infrastructure Plan: A Call to Action, GLA 2019 **london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cultural_infrastructure_plan_online.pdf**
 - Understanding the value of arts and culture, AHRC 2016, **ahrc.ukri.org/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report**
 - Global Trade Report, Creative Industries Federation 2018, **creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2018-01/Federation%20Global%20Trade%20Report_0.pdf**
 - Shaping the Next Ten Years: Draft Strategy for Consultation, Summer 2019 **arts council.org.uk/publication/draft-strategy-2020-30**
 - Sectors Economic Estimates GVA, DCMS 2016, **gov.uk/government/statistics/dcms-sectors-economic-estimates-2016-regional-gva**



Communities and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	9 January 2020
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Westminster City Council's role in conserving heritage
Report of:	Julia Corkey, Executive Director of Policy, Performance and Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Sports, Culture and Community
Wards Involved:	All / Specific
Policy Context:	City for All
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1. Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of some of the council's roles and functions for conserving heritage in Westminster.

2. The importance of Westminster's heritage

Westminster has a rich heritage that has been centuries in the making. This heritage is enshrined in both intangible things like Westminster's history and traditions and tangible things like Westminster's buildings, archives, and museum collections.

Westminster's unique character derives in large part from both the concentration and importance of its heritage assets. We have one of the highest concentrations of listed buildings of any local authority in the country and our designated conservation areas cover around 77% of the city. This includes many of central London and the UK's best known and most cherished areas of historic townscape, famous areas of the historic West End such as Soho and Covent Garden, the area of 'constitutional London' around the World Heritage Site with its concentration of uses associated with government

and the monarchy, 250 hectares of historic Royal Parks and a large section of historic river frontage. It also includes many buildings, spaces and cultural attractions of local historic interest which contribute to the attractiveness and mix of local residential neighbourhoods and are highly valued by local communities. Our heritage assets date from all eras of Westminster's development and, alongside more recent development, help tell the story of the how the city has developed and provide the rich texture that make Westminster such an attractive place to live, work, visit, study and do business in.

3. The Council's role in conserving heritage

The council has a number of roles in conserving heritage. One of these is its planning functions in relation to heritage assets (heritage assets include listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological priority areas, the Westminster world heritage site, scheduled ancient monuments registered parks and gardens and other local buildings and spaces of interest). This involves dealing with planning applications which affect heritage assets and listed building consent applications, designating and managing conservation areas, enforcement where there are unauthorised works to heritage assets, drafting planning policy as it relates to heritage and incorporating heritage within wider place shaping and public realm schemes.

There are also quite a large number of council owned buildings which are listed buildings or heritage assets. These include listed buildings like Council House, Marshall Street Baths and other small structures the Council maintains, such as street furniture, statues and monuments. It also includes a lot of the council owned housing, for example on estates like Churchill Gardens. The Council has a significant role as custodians of these buildings and structures.

Lastly the Council has a role in 'promoting' and celebrating heritage given its value to Westminster as a cultural asset and as an attraction for both national and international visitors. Visitor studies show that the UK's most visited tourist attractions include historic buildings within Westminster, and our historic environment has been cited as a key reason business chooses to locate here. For Westminster's residents, the distinctive character of each neighbourhood contributes greatly to a sense of place, and community belonging. The Council promotes and celebrates Westminster's heritage through things like the Westminster City Archives, whose mission is to preserve and share the unique written and visual heritage of Westminster. It also manages and runs schemes and initiatives like the Green Plaques Scheme and Black History Month. The Green Plaque scheme was launched in 1991 to commemorate the diverse cultural heritage of Westminster and the people who have lived or worked here. It highlights buildings associated with people of renown who have made lasting contributions to society. These schemes and initiatives help to recognise the importance of local heritage and celebrate the stories of what Westminster's heritage means to different communities in the city.

4. The Council's planning functions and duties in relation to heritage assets

The City Plan 2019-40 sets out the council's strategic framework and ambitious vision for growth. This has required a re-evaluation of and amendments to adopted policies where necessary. Westminster's current heritage policy framework is set out in the adopted Westminster City Plan (November 2016) and Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This has provided a long standing and well-understood framework for the conservation of Westminster's historic environment. However, the detailed UDP policy is also significantly out of date, with its conservation and design policies in use since 2004(although the plan not formally adopted until 2007). The new City Plan looks to create a more user-friendly approach to policy; in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5. National Policy and Legislative Context

Government advice on planning for the historic environment is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF recognises that conserving and enhancing the built and historic environment is fundamental to achieving sustainable development. Section 16 of the NPPF, Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, includes the key requirements for Local Plans in relation to the historic environment. This sets the expectation that plans should *include a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk*. This should take into account:

- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- d) *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

The council has a number of statutory duties in relation to heritage assets. Decisions relating to listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (in particular sections 16, 66 and 72) and we are required to keep conservation areas under review and publish proposals for their enhancement.

5. Policy challenges for conserving heritage

There are number of policy challenges the Council faces in its role in conserving heritage. This paper highlights three of these challenges.

Conserving and enhancing Westminster World Heritage Site and setting:

The Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey, including St Margaret's Church was inscribed as a cultural World Heritage site in 1987. The Site is of outstanding architectural, symbolic and historic significance and has enormous cultural, social, environmental and economic value as a focal point

for UK government, democracy and national ceremony, as well as being one of the most visited tourist attractions in the country. It is considered to be a site of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). The NPPF makes clear that, as designated heritage assets of international importance, World Heritage Sites should be afforded the highest levels of protection. However, over the past 10 years, the World Heritage Committee has raised concerns about the care and conservation of the Westminster World Heritage Site and has threatened the site with inclusion on the World Heritage in Danger list. There has been significant pressure for large scale development in proximity to the site with the potential to impact on and harm its setting. There have been three UNESCO sponsored monitoring missions to Westminster (in 2007, 2011 and 2017). The report of the last monitoring mission in 2017²⁰ provided a series of recommendations. Part of meeting this challenge will involve having Draft City Plan policy address the UNESCO recommendations and have OUV as its central focus.

Balancing heritage conservation and growth: A key issue for Westminster is the high pressure for development and reconciling our economic and other objectives, including challenging targets for commercial growth and housing delivery, with the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. A central theme in the draft New London Plan is the importance of planning not just for growth but for ‘good growth’ which will contribute to sustainable development. The West End Growth Study has adopted this terminology—this study notes that part of good growth will involve maintaining historic buildings and the unique character of the area in order to retain the attractiveness of the West End for visitors and business.

Improving the environmental performance of Historic Buildings while retaining their significance: The challenges associated with addressing climate change are increasingly high on both central government’s and the council’s agendas. Historic buildings have a role to play in meeting these challenges. This has led to increasing pressure for upgrading and changes to the historic environment to increase energy efficiency and adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. It is vital such changes are proactively and positively managed and consistent with the aims of heritage conservation.

Furthering people’s understanding of Westminster’s heritage and ensuring that local communities are able to access the various aspects of it: Some of the challenges faced in conserving the historic built environment relate to a lack of understanding or value placed on our heritage assets. However, this also extends to other more intangible parts of Westminster’s heritage. It is important that people understand the value of conserving and promoting heritage, through things like the Green Plaque Scheme. Part of this involves making Westminster’s heritage accessible to the city’s diverse communities.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Lizzie Barrett
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