



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# MINUTES

**CHILDREN & ADULT, PUBLIC HEALTH & VOLUNTARY SECTOR  
POLICY & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
12 SEPTEMBER 2022  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children & Adult, Public Health & Voluntary Sector Policy & Scrutiny Committee** held on Tuesday 12 September 2022 at 6.30pm at Westminster City Hall, Room 18.06 - 18.08, Floor 18, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

**Members Present:** Councillors Iman Less, Tim Mitchell, Ellie Ormsby, Angela Piddock (Chair), Karen Scarborough, Selina Short and Max Sullivan.

**Co-opted Members:** Alix Ascough, Marina Coleman, Professor Ryan Nichol and Mark Hewitt.

**Also present:** Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary sector), Councillor Tim Roca (Cabinet Member for Young People, Learning and Leisure), Artemis Kassi (Lead Scrutiny Advisor/Statutory Officer) and Linda Hunting (Policy and Scrutiny Advisor).

## **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the Members of the Council, co-opted Members and guests to the meeting, including, James Balloqui attending as an observer and one of Westminster's two Youth MP's.
- 1.2 The Chair invited the committee to join in a minute's silence in memory of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- 1.3 The Chair reminded Members that the Committee had both a statutory and scrutiny responsibility to scrutinise public health and education concerns of the Council.
- 1.4 The Chair requested that all answers to questions posed in the meeting be provided in writing to Scrutiny within two weeks of this meeting. It was noted by the Chair that answers would be made available to the Committee as well as tracked on the action tracker by the Policy and Scrutiny team.

#### 1.4 **ACTIONS:**

1. All responses to questions arising from the meeting to be provided to the Policy and Scrutiny team by no later than Monday, 26 September 2022.

## 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest registered.

2.2 It was noted by the Chair, that Scrutiny would need to compile a list of any declarations for committee members.

#### 2.3 **ACTIONS:**

1. Scrutiny to compile a declarations of interest document for its members of this committee.

## 3. **MINUTES**

3.1 The Chair sought approval that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July be approved. as a correct record of proceedings.

3.2 The Committee Members agreed the minutes as a correct record of proceedings.

## 4. **PORTFOLIO UPDATE – CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR**

4.1 The Cabinet Member provided an overview of her portfolio including its service areas, priorities for the year ahead and key service updates/issues. The Cabinet Member responded to questions on the following topics:

- The £1.2m released from the Public Health Grant to the Capital programme and how those funds are being spent, in particular, what plans are in place to address green spaces and prioritise neighbourhood projects for residents.
- How the qualifier of 'deprivation' in relation to Public Health Grant spending is decided.
- The Bi-Borough Place Based arrangements for social care and at what stage a report will be available from the Health and Wellbeing Board on the newly constituted Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- The importance of strengthening the engagement with partners to support and develop the mental health strategy.
- The need for further information regarding the Green Doctors Service.
- The progress with the Polio vaccination rollout, including, what is being developed to encourage parents to vaccinate their children.
- The work commenced to support young people to reduce isolation and homelessness.

- The importance of a long-term Westminster Council strategy for combating hot weather preparedness, including within schools.
- 4.2 Other issues discussed were a trial dose of the Monkeypox vaccination given to residents in Chelsea and Westminster Hospital to aid the supply shortage, the need for a cold weather preparedness plan and data collection and sharing and the need for extra security and an understanding of data held and shared by GP practices.

4.3 **ACTIONS:**

1. That a paper about the Gordon Hospital, to include information of the public consultation to come to the October Policy and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
2. That a report from the NHS on the plans for Palantir be arranged for the Committee.

**5. PORTFOLIO UPDATE – CABINET MEMBER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, LEARNING AND LEISURE**

5.1 The Cabinet Member provided an overview of his portfolio including its service areas, priorities for the year ahead and key service updates/issues. The Cabinet Member responded to questions on the following topics:

- The continuing financial pressures on schools to provide basic educational needs to students, especially in deprived areas and what measures are in place by the Council to support schools in the current financial climate.
- The continuing pressure on funds available for school headteachers and the increase in costs to provide school meals to pupils, the importance of providing a form of school meal to pupils in deprived areas, and what provisions are being made by the Council.
- The falling pupil numbers across Westminster and what can be done to improve the situation.
- The ongoing concerns around the breadth of schools that provide a school uniform support scheme.
- The Bi-Borough School Inclusion Strategy.
- The expenditure of the Cultural Fund.
- What the continuing support will be for Ukrainian arrivals.

5.2 Other issues discussed were how the Council is measuring the effectiveness of the school uniform provision, the availability of the English language provision for asylum seekers in hostels, the financial implications for the mid-year pupil entrants, the cost of the LOC scheme and the service provided by partners, and the Everyone Active Contract.

5.3 The Chair advised Members finances would be a primary focus at the next Committee meeting in October.

#### 5.4 **ACTIONS:**

1. That the proposal to the Department for Education regarding the English provision for asylum seekers be provided to the committee.
2. That details of the Youth Offending Team caseload under the new safeguards will be available to the Committee for review.
3. That a briefing note on how the funds within the Cultural Fund have been spent will be circulated to the Committee.
4. That details of how the Children's Library will be financed will be circulated to the Committee.
5. That statistics for the launch of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and any links between this and the Bi-Borough School Inclusion Strategy be circulated to the Committee.

### 6. **ANNUAL YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

6.1 The Chair welcomed Sarah Newman (Bi Borough Executive Director of Children) and Madhu Chauhan (Head Early Help Family Services) to introduce the paper and provide an overview of the report. The Executive Director responded to questions on the following topics:

- The issue of non-engagement in education with young offenders and their parents or carers.
- The challenges in policing the over-represented groups, in particular, stop and search initiatives.
- The importance of early intervention with young people.
- The ongoing issues in the borough of the use, sale, and evidence of a systemic problem with the use of the drug, nitrous oxide.
- The importance of stronger communication and engagement with the community regarding s.60 stop and search powers under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.
- The issues with gangs present in the borough, including the exploitation of vulnerable residents.

#### 6.3 **ACTIONS:**

1. That details of the possible links between the use of nitrous oxide and mental health issues in young people will be provided to the Committee.
2. That a glossary of the terms, and explanatory details to accompany the charts used in the Westminster Youth Justice Strategic Partnership Plan be provided for the Committee.
3. That more recent reoffending data of young people were be provided to the Committee.

4. That ideas for further resources that would enable the MET police the ability to deal with crime more effectively be provided to the Committee.
5. That an update on the points discussed in the meeting that derived from the report be provided to the Committee in six months' time (March 2023). This should be included as part of the Cabinet Member Report.

## **7. OUT OF SCHOOL PROVISION**

7.1 The Chair welcomed Ian Heggs (Bi-Borough Director of Education) and Iraklis Kolokotronis (Bi-Borough Principal Early Years' Service Education) to introduce the paper. The Bi-Borough Director of Education responded to questions on the following topics:

- The ongoing issues in collating key information and identifying the challenges that affect long-term retention in schools.
- The multi-school hubs and making that provision more sustainable.
- The updating of information on the Family Information Service being carried out in a timely manner and regularly.
- The cause for concern, that only 8 out of 31 eligible schools in the borough are engaging with the 'Magic Breakfast' scheme.
- That the 'Magic Breakfast' website needs to be updated and promoted more robustly.
- The ongoing impact of pupil retention for the Out of School Provision and the knock-on effect of this, including, the difficulties with retaining staff and using appropriate venues for these activities.
- The shortage of Out of School Provision for parents and carers of children aged 0-5 years and the cause for concern over the schools and families that do not meet the eligibility threshold for the Out of School Provision in Westminster.
- The list of activity clubs available are not all registered with Ofsted.
- The importance of a 'Holiday' Out of School Provision.
- The difficulties around creating suitable training for all providers of the After School Provisions and the issues of these activities being unregulated.
- The import role of youth clubs and how they need to be promoted more actively throughout the Borough.

7.2 Other issues discussed were the idea of schools sharing staff to facilitate the use of more hubs for the out of school provision, the introduction of the 'Walking Bus', the ability for parents and carers to obtain the necessary information about services available, whether volunteers be utilised for Westminster Connect with the appropriate measures, whether there is capability to provide milk as an alternative to Breakfast Club or the alternative of a piece of fruit and the Bi-Borough After School music hub provision.

### 7.3 **ACTIONS:**

1. That the 'Magic Breakfast' website will be promoted and updated more regularly.
2. That details of cultural enrichment factors that are prioritised by the Council be communicated to the Committee.

## 8. **WORK PROGRAMME**

8.1 The Committee reviewed potential items to be prioritised for the 2022/23 work programme, which includes focussing on:

- The continuing financial pressures facing primary schools.
- The cost-of-living crisis and the effects on residents, particularly those in deprived areas.
- The Primary Health Care offer within the borough.

8.2 The Committee noted the importance of the Scrutiny being demand-led and flexible in its approach and with its priorities on the work programme, in order to be responsive to ever-changing demands on the Council.

8.3 The Chair advised Members the focus of the next meeting in October would be the health provision of the borough.

8.4 Other issues discussed were scrutiny power over NHS services, including inconsistencies with Primary Care providers in the borough and the concerns with the implementation of Palantir in GP practices and their access to NHS data.

### 8.5 **ACTIONS:**

1. That a guest be invited to speak at the next Committee meeting from Gordon Hospital.
2. That a site visit be arranged to Gordon and St. Charles hospitals for Committee Members.
3. That an informal meeting to be scheduled with Committee Members before the next full Committee meeting to discuss work plan priorities.
4. That an informal meeting of Cabinet Member Officers will be scheduled to aid Scrutiny Officers with forward planning of priorities.
5. That feedback will be provided to the Committee regarding the 'Magic Breakfast' provision.
6. That a consultation be arranged so the Committee can assess the intended roll-out of the Palantir services.

**9. TERMINATION OF MEETING**

9.1 The meeting ended at 8.15 pm.

CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_