

Council Meeting: 9 July 2014

Briefing Note

Subject: Better City, Better Lives

Background

Better City, Better Lives (BCBL) is the strategic vision for Westminster City Council. The vision was established in 2013 and is based upon the principles that everyone has a role in making Westminster a healthier and safer city, a more enterprising city and a more connected city.

At the establishment of the strategic vision, and then on an annual basis, a range of objectives and performance measures which will contribute to the delivery of the vision are established and agreed by the Executive, in consultation with their respective departments. In addition to the specific deliverables, there is an expectation that Westminster also retains its core focus of keeping council tax low, the streets clean and supporting the most vulnerable members of our society.

A Healthier, Safer City

The Healthier, Safer strand of the vision seeks to ensure that residents and businesses feel safer in their local area and that enforcement activity is paid for by those who cause disturbance. As Healthier, Safer city is also one characterised by strong, responsible families who give every child the best start in life and where the local authority utilises its new responsibility for public health to help our residents make healthy and informed lifestyle choices, in the process reducing reliance on public services and targeting resources to achieve specific outcomes.

Some of the successes include:

- The hosting of the first (and second) Westminster Mile;
- 340 families having used our kick start programmes to help them lead a healthier lifestyle;
- A new flagship health and fitness facility at Porchester Hall; and
- The launch of an Adult Reducing Reoffending pilot.

A More Enterprising City

The vision of an Enterprising City is one where every young person has the skills and opportunities to have a successful career, and businesses are able to thrive and be successful. It is a city where services are delivered in a sustainable way and where every pound spent is committed to achieving a real outcome.

Some of the successes include:

- Helping over 500 people into sustainable employment through the Workplace Coordinator scheme;
- Rolling out a new Employment Passport across six schools in the Tri Borough area, ensuring we have a skills ready workforce
- Supporting the Sir Simon Milton Foundation to secure the agreement of the Department for Education to deliver a University Technical College;
- Delivering a new City Save scheme which provide special offers and discounts to Westminster Residents;
- Freezing Council Tax for a seventh successive year – and pledging to freeze it again in March 2015; and
- Supporting the creation of a new Enterprise Hub in the North of the City.

A More Connected City

The third part of the vision is to create a more connected city where everyone feels more involved in their local community and where it is easier to make connections with one another, to jobs, services, information and decisions affecting the area. This seeks to establish a city where communities are more able to help themselves and each other, have a greater say in the direction of their area and where more residents are prepared to donate their time to volunteering.

Some of the successes to date include:

- The launch of a new website, making it easier for people to connect and do business with the local authority;
- Facilitating 850 volunteering opportunities in the first year, with 1,000 to follow in year two;
- Supporting and facilitating range of devolution pilots, from Team Churchill Gardens, to establishing Neighbourhood Forums to the election of the new Queens Park Community Council; and
- The delivery of the annual tea dance, which was attended by nearly 2,000 older people and facilitating 51 events across Westminster as part of Silver Sunday.

The third year of the Better City, Better Lives vision will be launched through the Leader's speech at the Annual (Council Tax) Council meeting in early March 2015.