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Title:	Community Cohesion Report and Plan for Next Steps
Report of:	Julia Corkey, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cllr Nickie Aiken, Leader of the Council
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Civic Leadership
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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Further to the Leader's update to the Westminster Scrutiny Commission (WSC) in September, this report notes the launch of the Westminster Community Cohesion Commission's report and outlines plans for the next steps.
- 1.2 The report will be launched on 29th November 2017 at a summit with stakeholders who contributed to the development of the report.
- 1.3 At the summit, we started discussions with stakeholders about what the action plan to take forward the report's recommendations should look like. The ideas from these discussions will be collated into a draft action plan which will then be consulted on more widely until Spring 2018. The final action plan will be launched at MyWestminster Day 2018.
- 1.4 The Leader has asked the WSC to then take on the monitoring of the implementation of the action plan.

2 Key Matters for the WSC's Consideration

2.1 The WSC is asked to consider:

- Whether there is anything arising from the findings in the report that is of particular interest and worth exploring further via a task group?
- If the strategy for developing the action plan suitably engages stakeholders and the community?
- What should be included in the action plan to ensure that it is measurable?
- How can scrutiny embed community cohesion across all its work?

3 Background

3.1 In 2016, as Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Cllr Aiken established a cross-party Community Cohesion Commission to undertake a review of the social integration of Westminster's communities and strengthen our work on cohesion. Cllr Aiken committed to carrying this work forward as Leader as a key City for All priority.

3.2 Westminster is one of the most diverse places in the world, with a rich array of residents and a thriving entertainment and cultural hub which attracts millions of visitors a week. With this in mind, the City Council has always had a particular focus on building strong and cohesive communities and a review was first launched in 2006 by Sir Simon Milton to develop a better idea of what people thought was needed for a cohesive community. Since then, a lot has changed - from the global economic recession to the decision to leave the European Union, changes in demographics, policy developments and a host of other activity which has all impacted the way in which people in Westminster work and live with one another.

3.3 The current review seeks to put a spotlight onto the current state of community cohesion in Westminster and ensure that the City Council and our partners are in a strong position respond to these challenges and changes.

3.4 Over the last year, the Commission has undertaken a four tiered, evidence based approach to inform our understanding of cohesion in Westminster. These were:

i). Reviewing national policy, literature and developments including talking to experts in the field such as Ted Cante and evaluating the Government's position and response following major disturbances.

ii). Analysing local survey based data analysis to gauge how residents feel about living in Westminster and get a sense of how far communities are gelling together at a rudimentary level.

iii). Benchmarking best practise with neighbouring authorities including a visit to Hackney Council to discuss how they are using their borough's unique assets to address similar challenges.

iv). Extensive active engagement with residents, stakeholders and local groups from all over the borough including over 25 events involving roundtables, evidence sessions, focus groups, attendances at partner forums and meetings. In parallel, we also launched a public online consultation page inviting people to share their experiences and stories of community cohesion.

3.5 Following this evidence gathering and extensive engagement activity, the findings and recommendations have been collated into a report.

4 Next Steps

4.1 Through its engagement activities, the Commission heard from a huge variety of stakeholders and experts. People from across Westminster and beyond gave up their time to tell us their views and we are keen to ensure that we continue to work together with stakeholders in our work going forward.

4.2 Therefore, we are holding a Community Cohesion Summit on the 29th November which stakeholders from across Westminster and who took part in our engagement activity have been invited to. The majority of the time at the summit will be used to discuss the shape of the action plan with these stakeholders. Their feedback will be collated to develop a draft action plan. We will then enable a broader conversation about the important values in Westminster by opening more channels, including a digital platform, for the community to discuss and feed-in ideas for the action plan. This will be promoted widely, to attain maximum engagement, and run until Spring 2018. Feedback will then be collated and the final action plan will be developed into a '#MyWestminster Charter'. With the approval of all members of the Community Cohesion Commission, this will be formally launched on #MyWestminsterDay 2018.

4.3 The Leader has asked the WSC to take on the monitoring of the implementation of the action plan.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Lucy Hoyte x8532
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