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Report of:	Councillor Nickie Aiken, Leader of the City Council
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Leader of the Council
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. I last updated the Commission on 27th September 2017, eight months after I was appointed Leader of the Council and six months after I launched City for All 2017/18.
- 1.2. In my submission for this meeting, I provide the Commission with an update on the Council's City for All vision, the My Westminster Programme and other key areas of new policy direction.

2. My Westminster Programme

2.1 My Westminster Fund

- 2.1.1 This is an open fund for community groups to bid in to for funds to be used on projects to support the needs of the Westminster community and its residents.
- 2.1.2 There are around 700 voluntary and community sector organisations in Westminster that focus on the needs of Westminster, our community and our residents. There are many more faith groups, amenity societies, and residents and tenant's associations.
- 2.1.3 The My Westminster Fund offers voluntary and community sector organisations in the city the opportunity to access funding for up to two years.

- 2.1.4 Bids were expected to demonstrate how funding will contribute to the delivery of City for All objectives with a particular focus on priority areas to be set out when the Fund is launched. Groups were able to bid for funds up to £10,000 per project.
- 2.1.5 The first round of the fund was open for two months, closing on 23 February 2018. 139 bids were received and assessed objectively against the published criteria. At time of writing, these bids have been reviewed by a cross-council panel of officers and recommendations have been made to a cross-Party Member Board for final decision.
- 2.1.6 The Member Board is due to meet, and announcements on funding are due to be made before the meeting of the Commission and a verbal update can therefore be offered at the meeting itself.
- 2.1.7 A second round of bidding is planned to open in June 2018, which will offer groups unsuccessful in the first round the opportunity to re-submit improved bids based on feedback offered from round 1.

2.2 My Westminster Projects

- 2.2.1 The My Westminster Projects are a range of Council-led initiatives to improve the lives of residents and the city as a whole.
- 2.2.2 Made up of seventeen distinct projects funded from a variety of sources, the package offers Westminster a fresh approach to issues the council has been grappling with for a number of years.
- 2.2.3 Most notably, projects have been commenced to tackle standards in private rented sector accommodation, abuse in the nightly letting sector, join up services to engage with people who find themselves on Westminster's streets and a pioneering project to support EU nationals who may be affected by Brexit.
- 2.2.4 A full list of the My Westminster Projects was set out in the recent Cabinet Member report approved by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Corporate Services and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sports and Community.

2.3 My Westminster City Lions

- 2.3.1 The My Westminster City Lions has been designed in partnership with the Westminster Youth Council to provide a new programme for young people in Westminster aged 13 to 16 to help them make the most of local opportunities in preparation for their future.
- 2.3.2 Supported by Lord's Cricket Ground, The Ritz and Somerset House, the programme will give young people the opportunity to visit the cultural venues that are on their doorstep through careers open days, free tickets and group visits to museums, theatres, cinema and galleries.

2.3.3 The programme will offer young people a different experience depending on their age. We will help them to progress through different tiers of the scheme and move towards a career that really inspires them.

2.3.4 The programme will be trialled in the Spring with a small cohort of young people with a view to rolling out in full during the new school year.

3. City for All – update

3.1 Community Cohesion

3.1.1 The report of the Community Cohesion Commission was launched on 29th November at the Community Cohesion Summit, an event I hosted with my fellow (Cohesion) Commission members in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.

3.1.2 Over a 100 key stakeholders representing community groups, partners, residents and businesses across the city were invited to the event – the majority of which had inputted into the report.

3.1.3 In addition to presenting the key findings and recommendations of the Commission, a key purpose of the event was to start building the action plan with stakeholders by discussing how the recommendations can be delivered.

3.1.4 Key feedback from the summit included:

- A focus on young people is important, especially in terms of ensuring people feel they have a stake in the city and can put down roots;
- Affordable housing is a priority;
- The activity of local organisations and community groups is essential to underpinning a sense of community identity and funding for these groups is imperative;
- My Westminster Day was a success and people were supportive of it being an annual event; and
- Smaller, tailored events are also important for bringing people together.

3.1.5 Further engagement activity is planned to obtain more feedback on how the recommendations can be delivered. This includes a session with the Westminster Community Network on 21 March and asking people to feedback via our website.

3.1.6 The My Westminster programme and my other recently launched initiatives directly respond to the recommendations in the community cohesion report and feedback so far. A table is presented below to demonstrate this.

Recommendations of the Community Cohesion Commission	Initiatives launched thus far to respond to these recommendations
1) The council will do everything it can to make sure that people feel safe and have a stake in the city, including making sure that there are decent and affordable homes across all types of tenure, giving our residents the ability to put down roots and build neighbourhoods filled with community pride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Westminster City Lions • My Westminster Housing Standards Taskforce • On track to deliver 1,850 affordable homes by 2023, including 760 council-owned homes
2) Working with voluntary and community groups, the council should help to bring people together to celebrate their diversity and take pride in the city's neighbourhoods, including organising meetings and events and doing more to ensure that harder to reach groups have easy access to information and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Westminster Day confirmed as an annual event • Specific events and initiatives in development as part of the My Westminster Projects • Internal Community Engagement Strategy launched in January 2018 • Loneliness and social isolation – not just older people but also the young - a key target area for money raised by the Community Contribution
3) The council should work with businesses, voluntary and community groups to develop an approach that enables businesses and other groups to easily connect with the community and jointly deliver activities to strengthen community cohesion. This should include making it easier for smaller organisations and community groups to bid for funds from the council and to participate in contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Westminster Fund making available £10,000 grants to community led projects • The Lion Awards – helping our businesses to support Westminster's communities and neighbourhoods by focusing their corporate social responsibility (CSR) agendas on local priorities.

3.1.7 The action plan will incorporate all the initiatives undertaken so far to respond to the recommendations (e.g. the My Westminster Programme, Lion Awards and Community Contribution) and propose other initiatives, including what other organisations and groups will do to strengthen community cohesion in Westminster.

3.1.8 The action plan will include a timeline against each initiative so the WSC can monitor progress. The action plan launch is planned for the summer.

3.2 **Don't Be Idle**

- 3.2.1 I previously updated the committee that, in collaboration with Councillor David Harvey, I have launched and championed a major new anti-engine idling campaign called #DontBeldle.
- 3.2.2 The campaign asks motorists to sign an online pledge to turn off engines at the side of the road and help to reduce asthma, heart disease and lung cancer in the area.
- 3.2.3 As of mid-March the campaign has reached 25,000 individual drivers with 7,000 people signing our pledge to turn off their engine whilst stationary.

4. **West End Partnership**

- 4.1.1 A full update on the work of the West End Partnership is on the agenda for discussion at this meeting.
- 4.1.2 Most notably that report outlines how efforts to secure dedicated West End funding via the WEP Investment Bid to Government were not successful. Feedback from government indicated that DCLG (as it was called at the time) had prioritised housing initiatives in its submission to the Treasury and as a result the WEP bid was not included in the Chancellor's Autumn 2017 budget.
- 4.1.3 Future funding options and opportunities are being considered.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers please contact Richard Cressey x 3403
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Appendix – Community Cohesion Report Evidence Base

1. Introduction

At the meeting on 29th November, the WSC asked officers for more information about the evidence the Community Cohesion Commission gathered to inform its report and recommendations.

This note provides a high-level overview of quantitative and qualitative data used to inform the Commission's findings, with a view to developing an approach to measuring the level of community cohesion going forward and if the recommendations of the Commission are having the desired positive impact.

2. Quantitative Data

A variety of quantitative data was used to inform the Commission about the make-up of Westminster's population and determine, at a base level, how much of a sense of cohesion there is in the community.

2.1 Population and Demographics

Various sources were drawn upon to help the Commission understand the demographics of our population and the trends behind changes and challenges in our community. These included:

- Departments from the council
- GLA
- Research from national studies
- Government Departments
- Census data
- Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates (country of birth, nationality)

Examples of the statistics the Commission gathered from these sources include:

- The City of Westminster is home to just under a quarter of a million people
- 42,600 children live, learn and grow up in Westminster
- More than 150 languages are spoken in the city's schools
- 28,400 older people live in the borough
- Westminster's local economy contributes over £55bn to the country's economic output, and our shops alone generate £13.3bn of revenue
- Westminster has over five million visitors a week

New data sets, and related insights in to community cohesion impacts are constantly being developed. In particular, the ONS have a work-stream to try and replicate much of the richness of census data through better use of administrative data, that would be available on a much more frequent basis. (e.g. data held by the Inland Revenue system).

Westminster is also developing a strong business intelligence team, that can more easily draw insights from large data than have been available previously. Both the

above will enable us to refine and improve the data available to underpin community cohesion work.

We should, however acknowledge that Westminster is the most difficult local authority area in the country (based on the ONS Census based “hard to count index,”) to collect accurate data on all communities because of many features that are prevalent in the City – in particular – high levels of population turnover, migration (international and national), diverse communities, students, second home /part time property use, people living in non-family groups and irregular migration.

These issues create higher levels of uncertainty in quantitative data. Westminster officers are working with ONS, in particular through the Census transformation work stream, to ensure that data for the City is constantly improving.

2.2 The Council’s City Survey

The Council’s City Survey is an annual, face-to-face survey of residents. The 2016 survey results provided a useful starting place to determine the level of cohesion in Westminster. For instance, when asked 82% of residents said that they thought people of different backgrounds got on well together. 69% of residents told us that they say more than hello and chat to their neighbours at least once a week. 72% of residents say that they feel like they belong to their neighbourhood, 59% feel that the friendships and associations that they have with other people in their neighbourhood mean a lot to them, and 58% believe that their neighbours help each other out. From these statistics it was clear that at a rudimentary level there is a good level of cohesion in Westminster.

The City Survey sample was increased in 2017 from 1,000 residents to 2,500. This expanded data means that results are much more robust at neighbourhood levels and across different community characteristics. These results are currently being translated into Business Intelligence dashboards that will enable wider access and analysis relevant to cohesion issues to happen. The monitoring of future results against a common core of questions will be a key part of the community cohesion action plan, as an upward trend would be a base level way of determining if actions taken under the Commission’s recommendations are making the desired impact.

3. Qualitative

By the very nature of it, community cohesion is a very subjective subject so the use of qualitative data was essential for the Commission to understand the level of cohesion in Westminster in greater depth. Therefore, the Commission was keen to engage with people from all across Westminster to gain a deeper understanding about how they thought the community gelled together, and the barriers to this and opportunities to enhance this. At over 25 events, roundtables, meetings and through on online consultation, the Commission spoke with:

- residents
- local businesses
- local voluntary and community groups
- faith and interest groups

- partners including Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Metropolitan Police
- the Children's and Adult's Safeguarding Boards
- council departments ranging from Libraries and Sports and Leisure to Community Safety and Environmental Health
- neighbouring local authorities

To structure their engagement, the Commission based each discussion with people on the four following questions:

- what does community cohesion mean to people in Westminster?
- what brings the community together and helps people of different backgrounds in Westminster get along?
- what challenges community cohesion in the city?
- what is the role of the council in supporting community cohesion?

The full details of the evidence gathered during these sessions is included throughout the main report and in detail in the evidence base section from page 20 of the report.

The Commission also found that there are a number of work and activities already underway in the city enabling social integration and supporting community cohesion. The Abbey Community Association, Community Health Champions and Integrated Gangs Unit are just a few of these examples. Case studies are included on these within the main report.

4. How will community cohesion, and impacts of the actions taken under the recommendations of the Commission, be monitored going forward?

Quantitative data will be key to measuring the level of community cohesion going forward. In particular, future City Survey data will be key. As part of the 2018/19 business planning process, the Council's Business Intelligence Team will also align indicators for community cohesion against the initiatives within the action plan.