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**Portfolio:** Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary Sector

**The Report of:** Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis

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1. **No key decisions have been made in the period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 18 April 2023.**

2. **The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date:**

### **Adult Social Care and Public Health**

#### **2.1 Ethical Care Charter**

2.1.1 The UNISON Ethical Care Charter was introduced “to establish a minimum baseline for the safety, quality and dignity of care” by ensuring good conditions for people working in the homecare sector. The Charter comprises 11 criteria, set across three stages:

- Stage 1 focuses on the commissioning and scheduling of home visits.
- Stage 2 relates to procedures, contracts, and training.
- Stage 3 provides a link to London Living Wage and other conditions of employment, including travel time.

2.1.2 I signed the Charter with the Leader of the Council on 5 May 2023 at an event attended by Christina McAnea, General Secretary of UNISON. Westminster is the thirteenth London Council to have signed the Charter. This event publicly demonstrated the Council’s commitment to the Charter and the actions arising from it.

2.1.3 Now that the Charter has been signed, the following actions will be taken:

- Incorporate all commitments from the Ethical Care Charter into the recommissioning of homecare services, which is scheduled for implementation from April 2024.
- In particular, evaluate the Council’s approach to providing compensation for travel time to ensure that it aligns with the Charter’s goals and commitments.

- Improve the focus on health and wellbeing and collaborate with the care sector to plan events that bring care workers together to share their reflections and best practice.

2.1.4 The Council will regularly assess its progress to ensure that it continues to be sustainably compliant, and to identify areas that will benefit from further improvement. It will develop a better understanding of where improvements are needed and co-design the next steps accordingly.

## **2.2 Learning Disability accommodation services and day services**

2.2.1 On 9 May, I met, along with Cllr Begum (Cabinet Member for Housing), Cllr Noble (Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Regeneration and Renters) and senior officers from Housing and Adult Social Care to discuss supported housing. Demand for specialist, supported accommodation is forecast to continue increasing over the coming years. Westminster is likely to need 90 additional units of specialist accommodation between now and 2040 for residents with learning disabilities.

2.2.2 As the Committee will know, potential sites sometimes become available, and the service will make a strong case to use them. Cabinet Members and officers will be working closely to ensure that there is a consistent approach to creating more local supply. This will include the work already underway on some sites (e.g. Carlton Dene) and buildings-based requirements for day services (e.g. Droop Street). Further, it will ensure that the evidence-base for future demand is clear, and it will identify opportunities across Westminster to meet this demand.

2.2.3 The new Housing Care and Support Framework for provision of supported accommodation for residents with Learning Disabilities was due to go out for tender in May 2023. This has now changed slightly and will commence in September 2023. The reason for this is to enable more time to elicit feedback and input from residents with learning disabilities and their families, and that work is now underway.

## **2.3 Digital platform**

2.3.1 A user-friendly platform for all residents' health and wellbeing needs will be developed to sign post them to local provision and support. The platform will be geared towards preventative interventions, encouraging people to seek support before reaching a crisis point.

2.3.2 Officers are in the process of securing internal, technical resources to further progress the platform's development and will also be working with the Council's Digital and Innovation team to conduct an initial research exercise that focuses on the platform's intended audience and their needs. This exercise will inform future engagement related to the platform.

2.3.3 The target implementation date is Q4 2023-2024 (January – March 2024).

## **2.4 Community Outreach Mental Health Drive**

- 2.4.1 The Public Health team is currently working with government, voluntary sector organisations and NHS partners to amplify regional campaigns around mental wellbeing such as Good Thinking with Thrive London.
- 2.4.2 Local options are under development, including creating community conversation via Open Dialogue with the NHS, through upskilling Westminster's Community Health Workers.

## **2.5 Gordon Hospital**

- 2.5.1 In March 2020, Central and North West London NHS Trust (CNWL) temporarily closed the Gordon Hospital, which was the only in-patient psychiatric care service for Westminster residents in need of specialist mental health provision. The reason given for the temporary closure was COVID-19 related concern.
- 2.5.2 Patients were moved to other out-of-borough hospitals, and some were discharged back into the community.
- 2.5.3 CNWL has still not held a consultation on the Gordon Hospital's closure. It is likely that the formal consultation will start in September or October 2023. It has been made clear to CNWL's senior leaders that keeping the Gordon Hospital open or replacing acute inpatient beds in Westminster must be included in the consultation options.
- 2.5.4 The Gordon Hospital's closure has left Westminster with zero beds available in the borough for residents who require in-patient care, adding further pressure across the wider health and care system. Care in the community is not the only solution for people who need for specialist care, and there will always be a need for in-patient beds.

## **2.6 Butterworth Centre**

- 2.6.1 The Butterworth Care Centre is a 42 single-bed unit spread over three floors in a building in the St John's Wood area in the north of Westminster. The centre is currently registered with the Care Quality Commission as a mental health hospital setting and provides care for both mental health and continuing healthcare (including advanced nursing and dementia care). The provider, Sanctuary Care, gave notice to terminate its contract to the North West London (NWL) NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) last year.
- 2.6.2 With short notice given to the Council and other stakeholders, the ICB decided to temporarily close the service on 31 March 2023 following the failure to secure an alternative provider. All 12 Westminster residents were transferred to alternative care provision.
- 2.6.3 These residents are receiving welfare checks from the ICB. However, this has compounded the reduction in overall bed capacity for Westminster residents,

and the Council has continued to voice its concerns about this.

- 2.6.4 I have made representations to the ICB on behalf of the Council through direct communication to its Chief Executive. These have urged and petitioned for the Centre to be re-opened and to make changes to its communications, governance and planning of service changes, to ensure partners and stakeholders are involved in a timely manner.
- 2.6.5 The building is owned by the Hospital of St John & Elizabeth with three years remaining on the lease with the ICB. The options for the building's future use are to be appraised together by the Council and the NHS over the next three months. This will include analysis of demand and capacity requirements for this type of care.
- 2.6.6 A progress update this work can be provided to this Committee in September.

## **2.7 Global Majority JSNA**

- 2.7.1 Health data for Westminster shows that the more deprived an area is, the less health its residents are likely to be. Residents from ethnically diverse and global majority groups, and particularly residents from a Black ethnic background, are most likely to have poorer health outcomes, compared to residents from a White ethnic background.
- 2.7.2 To inform action that tackles inequalities, officers are finalising a needs assessment on the health inequalities that Westminster's Global Majority communities experience.
- 2.7.3 Between March-April 2023, the Public Health and Communities teams contacted specific voluntary and community sector groups in Westminster, such as the BME Health Forum and the Caribbean Men's dominoes club in Maida Vale. Targeted engagement was undertaken in form of open discussions with residents, frontline workers and charity representatives to better understand the health behaviours of the identified communities, the challenges they face related to services' relevance and accessibility, and the impact of wider social determinants on them.
- 2.7.4 As part of this engagement, officers are also seeking to understand the link between culture and health and people's experiences of systemic racism or discrimination, which also lead to worse health outcomes.
- 2.7.5 Early results have confirmed that people might face specific barriers to accessing the health services they need, such as discrimination, challenges navigating the health system, poor service user experiences and outcomes, and accessible discussions about health conditions.
- 2.7.6 People's health behaviours and their understanding of health varies across different cultures and religions. This can result in some residents feeling uncertain how and when to seek early support or why they should seek it.

This can be compounded by culturally-specific practices and people's previous experiences using services.

- 2.7.7 While issues with access to conventional NHS services and their cultural relevance persist, there is a strong, expressed need for follow-up support in familiar community settings, particularly for those who experience practical barriers and have additional intersectional needs.
- 2.7.8 Further, the diagnosis rates of long-term health conditions differ by condition and across ethnic groups. For example, not all health conditions are more prevalent among Global Majority residents, but residents from a Black or Black British Background are more likely to have a long-term health condition. They are three times more likely than White residents to have diabetes, three times more likely to be obese, and twice as likely to have hypertension.
- 2.7.9 Additionally, White Irish residents have also been identified as a population group with high rates of long-term conditions. Bangladeshi groups are also noted as having poorer health outcomes, in addition to their high concentration in social housing, an example of a wider determinant that can impact people's health and wellbeing. There are many other examples of residents who experience health inequalities including those with physical and learning disabilities.
- 2.7.10 Further work is being undertaken to synthesise learning before publication of the JSNA in the Autumn. Initial findings are helping to refine services that are due to be imminently commissioned, including the Integrated Healthy Lifestyle service.

## **2.8 Community Health and Wellbeing Workers**

- 2.8.1 On 27 April 2023, I went on a walking tour of Churchill Gardens with the Bishop of London to see the work of the Community Health and Wellbeing Workers (CHWW) pilot and discuss opportunities for involving faith communities.
- 2.8.2 The CHWW pilot is a joint scheme between the Council and the Marven GP Practice. It is being evaluated by Imperial College London. The programme aims to provide regular, proactive outreach to households in the area, building relationships and identifying and responding to needs in a way that works for residents.
- 2.8.3 The pilot has been nominated for the MJ achievement awards 2023 for tackling health inequalities and was cited as a best practice case study in the Fuller Stocktake Report.

## **Voluntary Sector**

### **2.9 Community Grants Funding**

- 2.9.1 £600,000 has been awarded through the Community Priorities Programme to 43 organisations (and 8 individuals) in 12 wards. Bids were reviewed by panels formed of residents and community organisations. The funded projects include activities such as boxing, steelpan workshops, community planting, Zumba, children's pottery, among others. Of the awarded funding, 84% went to organisations, and 16% to individuals developing new projects.
- 2.9.2 The Register of Active Residents, known as Our Westminster, was launched in late March 2023 and 102 residents have signed up. A training package will now be created to support their participation in council decision-making. This will include safeguarding, how council decisions are made in and unconscious bias.
- 2.9.3 Once the issuing of contracts to the successful projects has been completed, the team will then start to gather feedback from providers and residents who took part in the scoring to evaluate the process.
- 2.9.4 The timeline for the next round of the Communities Priorities Programme is to complete the community participation this financial year, with the awarding of grants April 2024.

### **2.10 Westminster Connects**

- 2.10.1 A number of changes have been made to improve the offer to volunteers. Monthly introduction sessions are held for volunteers, and have been established for English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners in WAES to create a pathway into volunteering. Bi-monthly online Feedback Forums started in April to provide a regular route to provide feedback.
- 2.10.2 The #Give16 staff volunteering programme offers a range of volunteering opportunities, including the Language Café, homework clubs, mentors and reading volunteers. A closer relationship with Night Stars has been formed.