

# Appendix A - Future of Westminster Commission Housing Review – Council Response to Recommendations

## Future of Westminster Commission – overarching recommendations

	Recommendation	Recommended response (Work in progress/agree/consider in more detail/note/reject)	Comments/outline response	Lead Directorate	Supporting Directorate
<b>Supporting Communities</b>					
1.	The Council should identify a clear programme of service reconfiguration and other initiatives that it will commit to in order to contribute to the #2035 objective recognising that overall the programme is a joint effort by the Council and Imperial Health Trust in collaboration with the voluntary and community sector and driven by local communities. It is important for the Council to commit the necessary resources for its part in the programme and this should be seen as a central element in the budget process this year and in future years. We suggest that for this year the Council incorporate an element of external challenge in doing this within a formal process overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and the Voluntary Sector and the Cabinet Member for Finance.	Work in progress	<p>The communities team are working to deliver training around #2035, which includes embedding this into the Westminster Way corporate training programme. The team will engage with voluntary and community organisations, and other public sector partners in developing and progressing this work. The training programme is intended to support all parts of the Council to implement this approach into their work, and to communicate and celebrate their successes. A quarterly success report can be provided to Members. The aspiration is that #2035 will underpin work across the council to truly improve outcomes for all communities. This piece of work is still in its infancy in terms of service design and delivery.</p> <p>Strategy &amp; Intelligence and Public Health are collaborating with Imperial to bid for a grant from the National Institute for Health and Care Research of £5million over 5 years to set up a Health Determinants Research Centre within the Council, to address health inequalities within Westminster. This programme of research will support #2035 by helping to understand how key determinants of health impact at a local level across disadvantaged groups and all communities across Westminster. As a result the council can strategically target intervention through its policies and services for lasting change.</p>	I&C	All directorates
2.	The establishment of an early intervention data team, drawn from existing data and intelligence functions, to be based in a community facing setting in one of the more deprived areas of the City North Paddington, Pimlico South and/or Church Street with appropriate resources and with a remit to work jointly with VCS organisations, health services and schools that serve those diverse communities.	Consider in more detail	<p>The first step will be to strengthen the existing relationships between this function and frontline services who hold local knowledge at a granular level by establishing virtual teams based around geographically specific issues e.g. barriers to work in North Paddington.</p> <p>We will look at how we work with other agencies and VCS organisations, beyond gathering and sharing data and intelligence, and look to embed a system-based approach where the Council plays an enabling role in bringing together the various agencies and individuals needed to work on a common purpose. This could be done through the existing work on adopting place-based working and through existing streams of work on, for example, anchor institutions, community hubs and community participation, with the potential outcome contributing to a more integrated and inclusive decision-making process that addresses local needs and challenges.</p> <p>In considering this the council will engage with the UK Prevention Research Partnership and/or Act Early (<a href="http://actearly.org">actearly.org</a>) for prevention/early intervention data good practice. Both organisations already work with local authorities on early intervention activities.</p>	I&C	GPH

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3	The Council should engage with local communities to work out which are the most important areas for locally based face to face service delivery and agree an affordable strategy for neighbourhood services that includes collaboration with other service providers such as the Police, local GPs, RSLs, employment services and VCS organisations. This should include mechanisms to ensure that the needs of families and individuals are considered and addressed in the round and should be a central part of the budget and delivery plan process for future years identifying a clear resourced timetable for delivering new local hubs and offices.	Agree	<p>The Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan gives a clear commitment towards building and nurturing strong community foundations and actively working with our communities to improve people's health and wellbeing, particularly for our most disadvantaged residents. This approach to shaping services is already being incorporated into local task groups in Edgware Road and Queensway, place-based programmes in North Paddington, Community Hubs, and the roll out of housing estate offices.</p> <p>In terms of a clear programme of delivery, Queens Park Housing Service centre was opened 5th of June and a further Estate Office at Lillington &amp; Longmore is scheduled to open in September 2023. We are working across the Council to bring forward plans for Community Hubs where appropriate services will have a presence.</p> <p>The Safer Westminster Partnership has now approved the development of a Safer Neighbourhood Board, to be led by the police and supported by the council. Police and council have now agreed to institute these meetings and the first was held in April 2023.</p>	I&C	All Directorates
Organisational Development, Budget and Delivery Review					
4	The development and roll-out of training for all the Council's staff, starting from the top, in effective community engagement and consultation, alongside further support for the central team with direct responsibility for delivering this agenda.	Agree	Work is already underway on the delivery of training courses on consultation and engagement which will be open to all council employees. Communities also currently deliver a series of "Masterclasses" on community engagement. Looking beyond the delivery of training thought should be given as to how best to share the intelligence that we gather about our local communities within the organisation to support future engagement and provide an evidence base to inform the prioritisation of resources.	I&C	People Services
5	<p>Agree and identify the priorities and the methodology, timetable and resources required for these reviews over the next two years as soon as possible.</p> <p><i>(CONTEXT FOR RECOMMENDATION) We therefore welcome Council's plans for a more fundamental review of Council priorities and resource allocation during 2023. This should involve deeper examination of resource allocation, Council capacity, capability and overall effectiveness within service areas identified by the Cabinet as priorities for review and for delivery of the Council's Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan)</i></p>	Work in progress	<p>The financial planning timetable ensures that Fairer Westminster is embedded throughout the process. The budget is therefore underpinned by the Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan</p> <p>This year's planning process is supported by a zero-based budgeting (ZBB) review, allowing members to review existing resource allocation and assess whether these resources can be reprioritised elsewhere across the council to support Fairer Westminster.</p> <p>The financial plan is a multi-year review (2024/25 to 2026/27), using ZBB, to implement priorities over a phased period that will allow the council to deliver on its priorities in a financially sustainable manner.</p> <p>Furthermore, a review of Scrutiny's involvement in financial planning provides more public transparency in the process</p>	F&R	
6	The budget and delivery planning process should be based on the Cabinet's priorities for the administration and its Fairer Westminster Strategy, and all funding decisions should be driven by that process. This would include Council Tax decisions, revenue and capital budget allocations, the strategy for allocating CIL revenues, and the use of all	Agree	The Council's current processes to develop the budget and medium-term financial plans ensure resources are applied in a way that most effectively and efficiently achieves the Council's Fairer Westminster ambitions while also taking into account those budgetary considerations that lie outside of Fairer Westminster priorities.	F&R	All Directorates

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	reserves and balances – in particular, examining the scope to repurpose any earmarked reserves towards the priorities set out in the Strategy and Delivery Plan and the #2035 programme.				
7.	The Council should establish clear requirements for all staff to spend a proportion of their time outside City Hall, including being seconded or based in community based organisations, to be exposed to the challenges of front-line service delivery and to strengthen their understanding of and engagement with the City's residents and communities, as part of developing a wider culture focused on tackling inequalities, responding to community priorities, and addressing the needs of people with protected characteristics.	Consider in more detail	All council staff are encouraged to make use of touchdown spaces located in council buildings throughout Westminster and there is an established Employee Supported Volunteering scheme "Give16" which supports officers to contribute to communities either in Westminster or their local area, the scheme is supported by Westminster Connects. In addition to this early scoping work has begun to determine the feasibility of a secondment programme as part of the VCS Investment Strategy as well as looking to develop a mentoring scheme between council staff and VCS organisations. Any large scale secondment programme or compulsory requirement would have to be balanced against the need to continue to deliver key council services.	People Services	All Directorates
<b>Cost of Living</b>					
8.	The Council should continue to use every vehicle it can to support those affected by the cost of living crisis including by providing further targeted support to tackle fuel poverty.	Work in progress	We agree that supporting residents during the cost of living crisis is a priority. The current COL working group will continue to review the evidence and the level of funding across all Cost of Living Support programmes and work out where further investment is needed. In response to fuel poverty in particular, additional funding has already been invested in Green Doctors service and £50k invested in Energy Vouchers, this will be kept under review, especially in preparation for winter 2023.	I&C	
9.	There should be joint work across the Climate, Housing and Public Health teams to scale up significantly a targeted programme of energy efficiency advice and works in preparation for next winter drawing on support from the Council's Carbon Offset funds.	Consider in more detail	We agree that joint working across departments is very important, and we will be reviewing our ways of working specifically around further scaling up of energy efficiency advice. Currently, our Housing teams are engaging with the residents in our lowest EPC homes and offering retrofit works. They are sharing their experiences through a demonstrator home and presentations at think tanks and the Heritage retrofit taskforce. Further engagement is required with housing associations and private households, which is being picked up as a cross-departmental piece of work through the North Paddington Programme.  Further discussion will also be had as to how best utilise the Carbon Offset Fund to support energy efficiency programmes. Housing Services currently manage the Rent Support Fund and target it specifically towards Council tenants who are either on partial benefits or receiving no benefits.	I&C	GPH, ASCH, ECM
<b>Voluntary and Community Organisations</b>					
10.	The Council should as soon as possible introduce a core funding programme for the voluntary and community sector of similar scale to its neighbouring boroughs.	Work in progress	A Core Grants Programme is being developed and it is hoped that this will go live later in 2023. We also have existing funding programmes directed towards supporting local projects which VCS organisations can bid for, i.e. Community Grants Programme and Ward Budget Programme as well as providing funding to VCS to deliver half term activities and food.	I&C	
11.	The Council should work with the sector to develop a local Compact on relationships and processes, identify opportunities for community asset transfers and community ownership, and consider longer-term mechanisms to embed community engagement at	Agree	-	I&C	

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	the core of its strategy, such as participatory budgeting or citizen's assemblies.				
<b>Community Engagement</b>					
12.	We recommend that based on this work the Council should re-examine and formalise its requirements for consultation and establish a central team responsible for ensuring that all consultation exercises comply with them.	Agree	Consultations are now listed on the Council's website and there is a dedicated resource within the communities team to ensure that this information is kept up to date and that services are aware of the need to publish details of all consultations on the website. The Communities Team is also working on consistent standards for consultation and engagement and have establish a QI Board to review planned consultation activity to ensure all meet high standards.	I&C	
13.	The Council should ensure that its approach to community engagement is planned and delivered in genuine partnership with local voluntary and community sector organisations and not seen as its sole preserve. Voluntary and community organisations often have links into communities that are stronger than the Council's and should be resourced through funding or secondments to deliver community engagement in area based programmes such as that for North Paddington.	Agree	The Director of Communities chairs the London Councils Community Engagement Network across London and so will benefit from the best practice across local government and beyond on engagement.	I&C	
<b>Making Change Stick</b>					
14.	Following Council decisions on which Commission recommendations should be accepted a clear plan for this overall monitoring approach should be agreed as part of their implementation.	Agree	This will be built into business-as-usual performance and programme management reporting. Consideration will be given to a "one year on" implementation reporting approach to set out how those recommendations given by the Commission and agreed by the Council have been progressed and their impact. This report will be shared with the Chair of the Commission and the individual review Chairs as well as Scrutiny Committees.	I&C	
15.	The Council should invite the Chair of the Commission, together with the convenors of the four sub-groups, to review and report on progress.	Note	As above	I&C	

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## Energy and Green Transition Review – Recommendations

	Recommendation	Recommended response (Work in progress/agree/consider in more detail/note/reject)	Comments/outline response	Lead Directorate	Supporting Directorate
<b>Strategic</b>					
1.	Every major decision should embed the CEAP's goals into the work of all other departments across the council and strategies, such as the planned new Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Westminster.	Agree	The council will only achieve its climate goals if carbon impacts are considered in everything the council does. The Climate Emergency team is working to ensure climate change impacts are considered in all council decisions. This includes through the introduction of the Carbon Impact Evaluation Toolkit to provide a standardised assessment of the carbon impact of all the council's capital projects. We are looking to build upon and strengthen this as part of creating a clear vision and plan for net zero 2040, which will include reviewing all decision-making across the council and better ensuring climate change is a key consideration within our activities, plans and processes. Other avenues include reviewing new tools to assist with decisions and assessing their carbon impact (e.g. Climaxcommunity or Slingshot) and exploring the opportunity of introducing Climate or Green Budgeting as part of our financial management.	ECM	All directorates
2.	As a revised CEAP is developed, Westminster City Council's political leaders should take a lead role in highlighting to the Government how the UK's Net Zero target cannot be achieved without the consent and action of communities and councils.	Consider in more detail	We agree on the need for greater central government support for our climate emergency action and will work with Cabinet Members to agree any lobbying activity. We should seek to build on our involvement in the London Councils Climate Programme which is lobbying government to better recognise LAs role in climate delivery on behalf of the London LA collective.	I&C	ECM
<b>Citizen Engagement and Communication</b>					
3.	The forthcoming Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly should therefore ensure that WCC reaches out to all voices not always involved in the climate debate – from residents, businesses and community organisations across the city to help inform the revised CEAP.	Agree	It is essential that our approach to climate change reflects the broad needs, ideas and opinions of our diverse communities. As part of this commitment, a representative group of residents from all parts of Westminster are being empowered to make recommendations as participants in our first Climate Change Assembly. They have been selected at random following a stratified sampling approach to ensure we reflect the local demographic. Businesses and community organisations have been engaged through Partner Engagement Workshops prior to the Assembly to gain buy-in and perspectives to inform assembly design. A range of local stakeholders will be engaged again when Assembly recommendations are published. Assembly recommendations will be presented at Westminster's Climate Leaders Group and will then inform revision of the Climate Emergency Action Plan. We continue to support this with wider engagement activities across our climate work, including a dedicated communication plan.	ECM	I&C
4.	WCC should set out clearly how it will maintain a continued dialogue, consultation and feedback mechanism with stakeholders and residents on the progress of the revised CEAP. As part of this, it is recommended that a	Consider in more detail	We are committed to building upon the relationships, networks and engagement we have established so far through our Climate Emergency work to date. This includes businesses, cultural organisations, school children and communities. We are ensuring through Westminster's Climate Change Assembly that resident voices are central to our climate action going forward. We are considering the	ECM	I&C

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	Citizens' Climate Panel should be established to coordinate, feedback and advise on the progress of the CEAP		best approach to secure an ongoing community engagement and dialogue following the Assembly, including scoping a Climate Champions network and enhancing the developing Sustainable City Charter network of businesses.		
5.	The recommendations from the House of Lords inquiry (and the 'withdrawn' report), though targeted at national Government, include a number of areas that could be explored by WCC as part of a Westminster Behaviour Change workstream (working with a Citizens Climate Panel) which would help inform residents and businesses how to reduce their climate impact as well as supporting the rollout of CEAP programmes.	Consider in more detail	<p>Most recommendations set out in the reports mentioned in the recommendation are aimed at national government- some we can consider at the local level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A public engagement strategy, both to communicate a national narrative and build support for getting to net zero, is urgently required.</li> <li>• Need to provide a positive vision and clear narrative on how the public can help achieve climate and environment goals, and to lead by example.</li> <li>• Should provide clarity to individuals about the changes we need to make, in how we travel, what we eat and buy, and how we use energy at home, and should articulate the many co-benefits to health and wellbeing of taking those steps.</li> <li>• Fairness is key to effective behaviour change. Must tailor behaviour change interventions to avoid placing a burden on those who can least afford it</li> <li>• Learn from examples of where it has effectively enabled behaviour change, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as from past failures. Should push the message that it is following the science, as it has in the Covid-19 pandemic, and it calls for close cooperation with experts.</li> </ul>	ECM	I&C
6.	Westminster must ensure by the time it has finalised a revised CEAP in 2023 that it has a new climate and environment communications programme in place, learning from other borough examples, and using existing print and digital routes but also new social media routes to 'shout out' the work it is doing to make the city a cleaner and greener place to live, and to ensure this is frequent and progress on engagement is adequately monitored.	Agree	There is cross-council recognition of the importance of regularly communicating the council's activities and achievements with regards to our net zero ambitions, but this must always be linked to supporting delivery of agreed project objectives. For communications, this will include raising awareness, helping to drive behaviour change or supporting front line engagement. Within the communications team there are officers supporting the Climate Emergency programme who work with the delivery teams to create a forward plan for future climate communications, based on project delivery milestones and objectives. This work forms the basis of a proactive and forward-looking communications plan.	ECM	I&C
7.	Communication on the Council's action on climate should be made a communications priority for the council communications team.	Agree	As above	ECM	I&C
<b>Resourcing Climate Emergency</b>					
8.	As part of updating the 2023 CEAP a review of the necessary posts and resource needed to ensure commitments can be delivered effectively should be undertaken.	Work in progress	<p>The Climate Emergency Programme has recently expanded to reflect the increasing size and scope of the programme. This is a priority for the Council and resource requirements will continue to be monitored and adjusted in response to any further changes in scope. Embedding climate across the council is essential to draw on all the council's resources and levers, and to highlight any other areas where additional resource is required for climate mitigation or resilience activities.</p> <p>The March 2023 budget approved £1.5m ongoing climate investment growth to support Westminster climate priorities which will provide the resource to take this work forward.</p>	ECM	F&R
9.	Westminster's Carbon Offset Fund should be managed by the Climate Emergency team, with	Work in progress	While we do not fully agree with the recommendation there is a recognition that management of the offset fund should be reviewed together with its branding,	I&C	ECM

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	appropriate governance arrangements in place.		guidance, allocation and governance to ensure that it can be distributed more effectively to support climate action.		
10.	A Climate Community Engagement post should be created.	Consider in more detail	We recognise that we need a clearer approach to community engagement on climate change as well as wider sustainability challenges such as improving air quality, greening and biodiversity. We need to ensure the engagement routes are streamlined to discourage duplication for recipients, including schools in particular. Whilst the CE Team does have two engagement roles now in post, we are still reviewing further engagement requirements across a broad set of sustainability activities. We are working closely with Communities Team and other services to consider opportunities for support or for streamlining council engagement activity through better coordination around existing channels, networks and partnerships.	ECM /I&C	
11.	The forthcoming Green Economy Strategy should establish an updated baseline for the green economy in Westminster	Agree	The council's Green Economy Programme is specifically outlined in the recently launched Fairer Economy Plan 2023-26. The recommendation is welcomed, as something we are already doing and work is underway with the economist function based in I&C to build out the baseline, however this baseline will focus specifically on the Low Carbon sectors in Westminster.	GPH & IC	ECM, F&R
12.	A new Green Finance post should be created with the WCC to take forward a new Green Finance vision and work plan for Westminster, including within this work plan all areas listed above.	Consider in more detail	We fully recognise the need to have a clear overall financing strategy for the climate programme based on a clearer understanding of the costs of action versus inaction. We also need support to fully embed climate impact assessments and the costs of mitigation into our financial processes, any green finance role created would be responsible for pursuing grant funding that supports the council's work around the climate emergency.  Any requirements to fund additional posts will be considered as part of the annual Financial Planning cycle which aligns financial resourcing with our Fairer Westminster commitments	F&R	ECM
<b>Data and Smart Energy</b>					
13.	WCC should set out a plan in their CEAP for how they will take adopt a more data-led approach to identify and target interventions, working more collaboratively with WCC's Smart Cities team and sharing (and learning) best practice with other London councils, many of whom have also commissioned their own LAEPs.	Agree	We recognise the importance of a data-driven approach to delivering a robust and credible Climate Emergency Action Plan. GHG baselining analysis and modelling was undertaken to underpin the plan development; to ensure action was targeted at key emissions sources in Westminster, that we understood what was needed to achieve net zero 2040 and that we had a clear baseline to monitoring our performance against. We are continually working to improve our understanding and evidence base, including through projects such as the LAEP, information sharing with external partners and stakeholders, and learning from the activities of other London Boroughs among others. There has already been progress with WCC emissions data being incorporated into the Smart Cities Operating System and we will continue to work with Smart Cities and Strategy and Intelligence teams to identify opportunities for storing and interrogating the data. We aim to take a more data driven approach to identify and target interventions, including through our recently developed Environmental Justice Measure mapping. Our most recent work has involved identifying new and additional data sources that could provide us with a much more granular understanding of emissions in Westminster.	ECM	I&C
14.	Westminster's work around energy data should be informed by the five recommendations of the Energy Data taskforce as set out in the Modern, Digitalised Energy System	Agree	We agree with the recommendation that that energy data should be informed by the five recommendations by the Energy Data Taskforce and continue to work closely with our strategy and intelligence team to improve our data quality and understanding. Progress has already been made in certain areas to meet these	ECM	I&C

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			<p>recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are in the process of incorporating the WCC energy data into the Smart Cities Operating System allowing the data to be more easily accessible by officers and to streamline the data gathering process.</li> <li>• There has also been work done to improve the reliability of WCC energy data with the aim to gather data directly from smart meters.</li> <li>• Where possible, we will also aim to be transparent with data and are currently in the process of developing an interactive emissions dashboard which will be published on the WCC website.</li> <li>• Officers are working with the Smart City team on a long-term project to create a digital portal for the Sustainable City Charter that will feed building level energy data from Charter signatories through to a Smart City data platform. However this will take time to be fully realised.</li> </ul>		
15.	Westminster should therefore look to develop a Smart Energy City Collaboration, working with stakeholders across the borough, including UK Power Networks, neighbouring boroughs and the GLA to better understand the demand side challenges as we move to a more active, smarter electricity distribution network in the city.	Consider in more detail	Work is underway to develop a Local Area Energy Plan (LEAP) for Westminster which will, amongst other things, help inform the energy systems used in future council-led developments and the feasibility of creating new and/or expanded low-carbon heat networks and communal heating systems in Westminster, for our commercial stakeholders and investors. How we implement this will be informed by the findings of that study but we are confident that there will need to be some means of ongoing coordination of relevant 'Smart Energy' stakeholders for the city to ensure ongoing partnership working. We will need to consider the resourcing implications as well as the detail of the recommendations before determining what this might look like or be focused on.	ECM	GPH, I&C
16.	As part of the Smart Energy City Collaboration Westminster should also out ambitions for the growth of rooftop solar PV projects and the increased use of electricity storage across the city	Consider in more detail	The work to develop a LAEP will help to identify rooftop solar PV opportunities which can be pursued - we agree that the council should use the outputs of this to support ongoing collaborative working with 'Smart Energy' partners to drive implementation. Within the council's own estate, the corporate property decarbonisation programme has identified suitable buildings for the installation of Solar PV and installed arrays for example, on our leisure centre buildings.	ECM	GPH
<b>Net Zero North Paddington and Community Energy</b>					
17.	As a priority WCC should map out what provisions it needs to make to ensure its revised CEAP programmes can be delivered early on – and effectively – in the North Paddington area of the city.	Agree	Area-based implementation will be key to demonstrating what a net zero 2040 Westminster could look like and to realising the wider benefits that come with it. It will also be important to informing our understanding of the barriers and solutions to implementation, including driving behaviour change at local level. As such, reviews are already under way with the CPMO Programme and Communities team to identify how we can embed climate initiatives into the year one delivery of the North Paddington programme and target opportunities to deliver CEAP actions at a local level through a holistic programme-wide approach working with the community. The Environmental Justice Measure will support this targeting.	GPH	I&C / ECM
18.	A community-led Net Zero North Paddington study should be commissioned by WCC to set out a shared vision on how to achieve net zero for the area.			GPH	I&C / ECM
19.	Similar to other boroughs in London, part of Westminster's carbon offset funds should be directed to a new Westminster Community Energy Fund, with a dedicated Westminster Community Energy Officer supporting	Agree	Plans are already in place for a Community Fund to speed up delivery of the local benefits of Carbon Offset funding as well as to review the guidance and approach, in order to make it easier for community groups to access this funding. Further planning around the resourcing to support this is underway.	I&C	I&C / ECM



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	applications from community groups across the city.				
<b>Retrofitting</b>					
20	A comprehensive <i>Homes Retrofit Action Plan</i> for the city is needed to give a clearer idea to <i>all residents</i> of a route for them to support their pathway to a net zero home.	Consider in more detail	The Council agrees that retrofitting is a top priority and critical to our ability to achieving our climate emergency goals. To amplify our retrofitting work, the Council agrees to undertake a resource review of the current programme of work, to create a framework for a retrofitting programme that meets the ambition and challenge set by the EGT Review (including the points made on Retrofit Taskforce and Major Energy Users workstream) and the possible additional resource required to deliver it. This will then be taken forward as part of our budget setting process.  The Council also agrees to publishing a Housing Retrofit Action Plan for both the city and the Council.  Work is currently underway with data mapping of the energy consumption of buildings, a successful bid of £300,000 for the Retrofit Task Force to increase resource and the continuation of our retrofit assessments on all voids to bring homes up to an EPC B or as close as practical.	GPH	ECM, F&R, I&C
21	WCC should publish a <i>Housing Retrofit Action Plan for Westminster</i> by summer 2024	Consider in more detail		GPH	ECM, F&R, I&C
22	Westminster's net zero ambitions simply cannot be achieved without a step change in its approach to retrofitting buildings in the city. This will require a comprehensive programme of work that will require a significant boost in resource by the council	Consider in more detail		GPH	ECM, F&R, I&C
23	The EGT recommends increased resource deployed to the Retrofit Task Group as soon as possible with the appointment of a Retrofit Programme Manger and team to expand the scope of the Taskforce's work, research and outputs.	Consider in more detail		GPH	F&R
24	Establish a Major Energy Users workstream to identify those buildings with the highest energy consumption and set out best practice for reducing their carbon impact	Consider in more detail	GPH	F&R, I&C	
<b>Fuel Poverty</b>					
25	WCC should build on the MEES+ scheme, to provides the output from these programmes to the GLA and other London councils, as well as informing a wider MEES+ scheme in Westminster	Consider in more detail	In principle we recognise the need to expand on the current MEES+ scheme but are still currently delivering the pilot - this is set to be completed by the end of the 2023/2024 financial year. Upon completion, the council will then be able to review the success of the MEES+ grants to help inform an ongoing strategy. It should also be recognised that the MEES+ pilot is being delivered alongside ongoing MEES enforcement, both of which will need to be included in an overarching long-term strategy.	ECM	I&C
<b>Decarbonisation of Heating and Heat Networks</b>					
26	Demand reduction is the first and most important element in relation to reducing Westminster's reliance on gas heating – and hence the EGT's recommendations around energy efficiency in homes and businesses (earlier on in this report) must always be considered as a necessary first step in any initiative in relation to the provision of clean heat.	Note	This will be reflected in Housing and Development service delivery.	GPH	ECM, F&R
27	As a priority, WCC should reach out to residents to identify a mix of household types in the city that would welcome the installation of a heat pump as an alternative to their existing gas boiler, and look to provide some 'hand holding'	Consider in more detail	"In order to meet our net zero 2040 target we need to better support households to implement energy efficiency measures. Both recommendations put forward a number of useful initiatives however further consideration and resource planning would be required before we could commit to delivering these suggestions. There is already activity underway to better support households - the revised	I&C	ECM

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	to these households in securing BUS grants and through the heat pump installation process.		Environmental Supplementary Planning Document will provide more guidance on the installation of heat pumps but there are no current plans to go beyond this in terms of directly supporting residents with installation. Given that the BUS grants do not cover the full cost of heat pumps the advice is likely to only benefit owner-occupiers or landlords who can afford the investment.		
28	To help support the deployment of heat pumps in Westminster, the council must go beyond simply signposting households to the MCS Approved Suppliers list and instead take a more active approach in helping households identify suitable suppliers, fast track applications that require planning, provide information on energy efficiency grants/support ahead of a heat pump install, monitor data on heat pump installs including changes to EPC banding issues, and cost information as a guide for residents, update the ASHP guide with revised information by surveying residents who have had a heat pump installed and so on.	Consider in more detail	The Retrofit Taskforce will look to create a 'Procurement club', which will enable building owners to aggregate retrofit demand for appropriate retrofit interventions (including heat pumps), to access a quality supply chain of services and products to carry out retrofit works. There are risks associated with directly pointing households towards specific suppliers, as demonstrated with the recent challenges with Solar Together suppliers. "	I&C	GPH
29	The Housing Team should be provided with more resource and support as a priority in order to secure these significant funds from Government in order to not only improve the consumer experience of heat networks – but also drive down energy bills for residents the as soon as possible.	Agree	Reviews are already underway to identify where greater support is needed - the key resourcing need identified within the Housing department is to join together the sustainability, assets strategy and M&E team, so that current heating systems can be more effectively assessed in order to apply for further government funding. The could be supported by other officers across the council, including any Green Finance role which could look at overall climate funding priorities and opportunities.	GPH	
30	Bringing together major heat (and cooling) heat users (hospitals, universities, housing providers, government and commercial offices) to explore how their anchor loads could form the cornerstones of future heat network zones across the city	Work in progress	Through major projects like our Local Area Energy Plan and PDHU Decarbonisation and wider South Westminster Area Network opportunities, we are working to understand heat network zone opportunities across the borough. As part of our local energy assessment process we are engaging a broad range of stakeholders and will continue to look for opportunities to build wider partnership networks with key energy users around this work as it develops. We are also aware of and connecting into external work being carried out by DESNZ reviewing the feasibility of heat network zoning in Westminster. We will continue to liaise with the teams and suppliers responsible for carrying out this assessment in order collaborate effectively and reduce duplication of efforts.	GPH, F&R	ASCH / CS
31	As a borough with the most significant district heating scheme operating in London, Westminster should approach London Councils to take forward a new heat network work strand – potentially liaising with the GLA to get technical support for this work from the Local Energy Accelerator programme	Work in progress	The council is already a part of the London Councils 'Renewable Power 4 London' workstream, which has a Decentralised Energy sub-group - however this group has been dormant for several months now. We agree there is a need to continue collaborating with organisations like London Council's and the GLA, and council support for any further initiatives will be dependent on resource availability amongst the other major workstreams being delivered.	GPH/ ECM	

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## Economy and Employment Review – recommendations

	Recommendation	Recommended response (Work in progress/agree/consider in more detail/note/reject)	Comments/outline response	Lead Directorate	Supporting Directorate
<b>Headline Recommendations</b>					
1	The council's proposed economic development strategy should set out very clear priorities and targets for council activity.	Agree	Working with the Economy and Employment review group in real time has meant that advice and recommendations coming forward from the group have helped to shape the Fairer Economy Plan, which launched on 20 June 2023. The plan sets out clear priorities and commits to the principles of building a strong, diverse and growing economy that benefits all residents and businesses and is the first step towards identifying and progressing towards our priorities. From here we need to work with partners and develop the evidence base, good practice, collaborative approach to building a long-term strategy.	GPH/ I&C	
2	The initial area of focus for the Council should be the North Paddington area, but that the lessons from taking a targeted and place-based approach should subsequently be applied to other disadvantaged areas of the city.	Agree	The Council is committed to delivering a Fairer Westminster, bringing better outcomes and opportunities across the borough. The North Paddington Programme aims to improve both service delivery and outcomes in the three wards of Westbourne, Harrow Road and Queens Park which consistently reports lower socio-economic indicators compared to other parts of the borough. The North Paddington Programme is being supported by CPMO (Corporate Programme Management Office) and progress of the North Paddington Programme will be periodically reviewed with a view to rolling out learning to other projects in the future, this is also the case with the Local High Streets Programme and the Queensway Strategic Group.	GPH	I&C, ECM
3	To work with anchor institutions and private sector employers to facilitate improved access to economic opportunities by other, less prosperous parts of the City	Agree	Work is currently underway to establish an Anchor Alliance comprised of major employers and BIDs to support community wellbeing and wealth.  We need to examine all our levers with private sector employers, including procurement, s106 and CIL to ensure our residents are getting maximum opportunities from these relationships.	GPH	
4	To develop a new shared vision for skills and employment through a Westminster Skills and Employment Board	Agree	We will soon be launching an Education, Employment & Skills Board to convene our key players and adapt the offer on all sides to maximise the opportunities for our residents. The Partnership will review the recommendations made by the Westminster Commission with its members, and also take account of partnerships under the existing Education Partnership Board.	GPH	
5	To increase its support for micro, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and Creative Industries	Agree	The Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan commits to a targeted programme of support to enable access to affordable, inclusive workspaces for underrepresented artists and creatives, providing them with routes into creative industries  We also have a dedicated Cultural Principal Policy Officer who runs a cultural grants programme and cultural network which is a regular and well attended meeting which supports creative and cultural partners.	GPH	
6	To focus on the right ways to support the economy of the CAZ alongside its resident population	Agree	This work is currently being captured as part of the Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan	GPH	I&C

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			Also via 'Vibrant West End' objective under the Fairer Economy Plan, where focus is on balancing the needs and priorities of businesses, workers, visitors and residents to ensure the economy of the West End and wider CAZ develops in a way that is sustainable, resilient and fairer.		
7	To improve monitoring and evaluation of the impact of Interventions	Agree	The council needs to be absolutely clear about the impact interventions are having. Effective evaluation of services is normally completed by a third party to ensure it's absolutely impartial. This will be dependent on funding.	I&C	GPH
Working with anchor institutions and private sector					
8	Encourage and, where possible, require anchor institutions especially those in the private sector to increase levels of procurement from Westminster-based SMEs, encourage the take up of existing initiatives such as the Mayor of London's Good Work Charter, target apprenticeship and employment opportunities at underserved communities in the city, support skills provision, and strengthen their presence in schools and colleges	Agree	While there is broad agreement with this recommendation there needs to be further consideration as to how best deliver this, which will include the consideration of signing up to the Mayor's Good Work Charter and advocating for its adoption by businesses in the city. We are establishing our Anchor Alliance which we hope will drive forward the aspirations around procurement. Meanwhile our Responsible Commissioning and Procurement Strategy, Fairer Economy Plan and the Employment and Skills Partnership Board address different components of the overall recommendation.	FR /I&C	CS / GPH
9	Explore ways to develop place-based partnerships between anchor institutions/major employers and specific neighbourhoods	Agree	The Council is currently involved in a wide range of place-based activity bringing together anchor institutions and local communities. We are trialling a new area-based approach through our North Paddington Programme and will look to replicate this and other ways of working across our High Streets Programme.	GPH/I&C	
10	Develop a menu of social value offers, based on identified community needs, can inform the work of the Anchor Institutions Network and inform the council's procurement approach to social value	Agree	See above response to recommendation 9	GPH	
11	Facilitate mentoring and peer support relationships through pairing firms and senior individuals in the CAZ with young people and SMEs from disadvantaged neighbourhoods within the city	To be considered	There is some good practice through the City Lions mentoring programme of how this can work. There have been 150 mentoring pairs between businesses and Westminster young people over the last 3 years. City Lions have produced a good practice mentoring handbook, mentoring training and the plan is to continue mentoring. Subject to the allocation of resources this is something that could be upscaled.  This could be further explored as a long-term aspiration of the Fairer Economy Plan, together with the recommendations around increasing opportunities for CAZ based businesses to deliver social value locally.  <a href="https://citylions.org/city-lions-mentoring/city-lions-mentoring-programme/">https://citylions.org/city-lions-mentoring/city-lions-mentoring-programme/</a>	I&C /GPH	
12	Maximise connections between CAZ-based employers and underserved communities in the city, for example through promoting school governorships, board memberships of community organisations, volunteering, schools outreach, and other routes	Agree	Our Responsible Business Network is made up mostly of CAZ employers and we promote opportunities to get involved with the community through a regular bulletin. We have plans to develop a platform to sit alongside the bulletin which goes out. The bulletin is co-ordinated with One Westminster, who help pull together needs from community orgs which are incorporated.	GPH	
13	Ensure that planning decisions for commercial space in the CAZ promote the provision of affordable workspace, with priority access	To be considered	Our current Enterprise Spaces Programme delivers accessible workspace to businesses and residents. Around 107,000 sq. ft. has been delivered in the CAZ, with more in development and secured through the planning system. Adopted planning policy is in place to support this.	GPH	IC

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	reserved for residents and SMEs from the city's underserved communities				
14	Encourage and, where possible, require anchor institutions especially those in the private sector to increase levels of procurement from Westminster-based SMEs, encourage the take up of existing initiatives such as the Mayor of London's Good Work Charter, target apprenticeship and employment opportunities at underserved communities in the city, support skills provision, and strengthen their presence in schools and colleges	Agree	While there is broad agreement with this recommendation there needs to be further consideration as to how best deliver this, which will include the consideration of signing up to the Mayor's Good Work Charter and advocating for its adoption by businesses in the city. We are establishing our Anchor Alliance which we hope will drive forward the aspirations around procurement. Meanwhile our Responsible Commissioning and Procurement Strategy, Fairer Economy Plan and the Employment and Skills Partnership Board address different components of the overall recommendation.	FR /I&C	CS / GPH
<b>Skills and Employment</b>					
15	The council should bring these partners and leading experts together to agree a clear vision for skills and employment for the city, measures of success, and a shared plan to deliver the vision. This should be done by establishing a Westminster Employment and Skills Board.	Agree	We will soon be launching the Education, Employment & Skills Board to convene our key players and adapt the offer on all sides to maximise the opportunities for our residents. The Partnership will review the recommendations made by the Westminster Commission with its members, and also take account of partnerships under the existing Education Partnership Board.	GPH	I&C  Children's
16	The council and its partners should aim to ensure that 90% of residents have essential digital, literacy, numeracy skills by 2030.	Note	The Fairer Economy Plan 2023 aims to increase the range of courses available through WAES, such as digital and sector-specific courses. Expand on the current successes of the community-friendly curriculum pathways to ensure that learners living in our most disadvantaged areas have access to learning. Ensure residents have sufficient access to the foundations of digital and technology, enabling them to become more digitally included.	GPH	
<b>SME Support</b>					
17	The council should support development of a strong network of community business advisers, based in Westminster's underserved neighbourhoods, who can identify micro and SMEs that would benefit from support and provide signposting and facilitation to ensure that they are able to access the most suitable provision.	To be considered in more detail	We will consider this alongside our area-based programme work (such as through our Community Hubs work) and review resources.	GPH	
18	The council should identify opportunities to expand its enterprise spaces programme.	Agree	The Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan 23/24 sets out a commitment to creating more inclusive and affordable workspaces – such as at 300 Harrow Road and Lisson Arches. Further opportunities, including through the planning system and Affordable Workspace guidance policy, will be sought.	GPH	
19	The council and its partners should work to jointly identify and market these opportunities.	Agree		GPH	
20	The Council should review its own practices, and work with major employers and anchor institutions across the city, to maximise procurement spend with Westminster-based micro businesses and SMEs (particularly those from disadvantaged parts of the city).	Agree	The Responsible Procurement and Commissioning Strategy 22/23 sets out how SMEs will be encouraged and supported to bid for council contracts.	F&R	GPH

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Support for the CAZ					
21	The council should continue to work with Central London Forward, as part of its cross-borough programme on the future of London's Central Activities Zone, and with BIDs, industry bodies, landowners, employers and community groups.	Note	Business as Usual Activity. All these partners will also be involved in post-publication engagement around the Fairer Economy Plan.	GPH	
22	The Council should consider reprioritising funding towards supporting the safe and well-managed activation of the West End, and mitigating its potential negative impacts, to ensure it continues to offer an attractive 24-hour environment for residents, workers and visitors of all ages and backgrounds and remains a world-leading destination	Work in progress	The Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan sets out the council's commitment to delivering long-term investment and improvement to the West End (including Oxford Street). Work is currently underway to bring forward a dedicated approach to the Evening and Night Time Economy along with a Cumulative Impact Strategy as (managing impacts while supporting businesses) and the on-going Meanwhile Uses Programme (pop ups) helps to reactivate vacant spaces for retail or cultural uses, incubation of local talent and entrepreneurs	ECM / GPH / ASCH / FR	I&C
Monitoring and Evaluation					
23	The council should establish a more systemic approach to performance management, evaluation and reporting should be established.	Work in progress	<p>We have already implemented practices to monitor and assess our performance and will continue to refine these.</p> <p><b>Summary of our actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have established a systemic approach to performance management that includes regular reporting, monitoring, and evaluation. We have the following corporate boards that address strategic concerns, risks, and opportunities: 1) Performance Board (quarterly) reviews strategic and operational performance, and the achievement of targets and key FW and council priorities. 2) Change Board (monthly) oversees the progress and performance of major projects and programmes.</li> <li>• We are reviewing all the corporate KPIs and targets for 23/24 to check their relevance and appropriateness in line with our corporate priorities. Our 23/24 corporate performance framework and the quarterly reporting of key indicators monitor performance challenges in our operational service areas. These quarterly performance reports are shared with the ELT, Audit and Performance Committee and published on our website.</li> <li>• From July 2023, we will produce a quarterly progress tracking report for the Leader, ELT and Cabinet to monitor the delivery of the new 23/24 delivery plan and other corporate priorities. These updates will include progress on deliverables and a new suite of delivery success measures for regular evaluation and impact assessment.</li> <li>• At Year End we will conduct a comprehensive annual evaluation of our completed actions and KPI targets to assess our impact on achieving the Fairer Westminster outcomes. This evaluation will include benchmarking, stakeholder feedback and if appropriate cost-benefit analysis.</li> <li>• Strategy and Intelligence (S&amp;I) will continue to provide strategic oversight and support to corporate teams and directorates. The team have supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directorates with business planning, strategy development and alignment of their work to FW outcomes</li> <li>• The CPMO to integrate FW outcomes into a framework for projects with clearly defined benefits that align with the delivery of FW outcomes. The CPMO has a benefits manager who tracks project and programme benefit realisation,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	I&C	

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			<p>working with finance business partners for financial benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will work closely with the Finance team to align the medium-term financial plan with achieving FW outcomes by evaluating savings and growth bids as part of the budget review process.</li></ul>		
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## Fairness and Equality Review – Recommendations

	Recommendation	Recommended response (Work in progress/agree/consider in more detail/note/reject)	Comments/outline response	Lead Directorate	Supporting Directorate
<b>Supporting Communities</b>					
1	Ensure adequate and sustained investment in partner/umbrella organisations and bring them fully into planning for neighbourhood services.	Work in progress	Our recently published Voluntary and Community Sector Investment Strategy (2023-28) commits to developing a core funding approach that helps to build sustainability and resilience in the local VCS, and that supports capacity in small and Global Majority led organisations, this goes beyond the specific organisations mentioned in the recommendation.		
2	Accept that Westminster has much to learn from community experiences and voices. Whilst resources are inevitably limited, and both councillors and officers have responsibilities to manage finances and determine priorities, everyone can benefit from a collaborative, open spirit of engagement.	Agree	The Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan 22/2023 recognises the need to build and nurture strong community foundations through engaging and listening to our residents, voluntary organisations and community groups. Since publication of the Delivery Plan last year huge progress has been made in engaging with our communities, from the Lived Experience project as part of the Changing Future Programmes, to introducing public participation to Council meetings (to launch in June 2023) and the ongoing work to reform the council's consultation process and deliver participatory budgeting.		
3	Develop local infrastructure, with an asset base, to reduce the vulnerability of these organisations to short term variations in support.	Consider in more detail	Through the new Communities team, the council is working to introduce longer term core funding to reduce vulnerability from shorter term support.	I&C	
4	Review on a regular basis access to space, facilities and workforce development (alongside core funding) for local and voluntary groups as patterns of need and services change	Consider in more detail	The Community Hubs programme is considering the offer more widely of community space. The VCS rental policy provides a way to balance social value produced and rental payment for VCS occupiers of council premises. The VCS policy is in place and enables groups in designated VCS buildings to apply for discounts against market rent. This Policy provides credit for community and social value and evaluates the needs of the applying organisation in making application for the benefit. Meanwhile use is welcomed and will be explored for all buildings awaiting a new future.	F&R /I&C	
5	Embed an approach to reducing social, economic, and geographical inequalities across the work of the council and champion this in dealing with statutory agency partners, including the NHS, police, DWP and others. Whilst supporting individuals in need can be a vital part of this, it must also be based on a recognition that inequalities are structural not personal.	Work in progress	In scoping the delivery of a poverty reduction strategy thought will be given as to how best incorporate this recommendation. The Council will embed a whole council approach in addressing the wider determinant of health through existing programmes like #2035 as well as working with other services to ensure that public health outcomes are considered across the council. Officers will ensure the Health Inequalities JSNA recommendations are embedded across the Council's work to help tackle health inequalities which will include an enhanced investment in the voluntary and community sector to reach those with the greatest needs. One of the key objectives in our organisational Anti-racism commitments is the establishment of a Westminster Creating equity (Tackling inequalities taskforce/action group) terms of reference are currently being scoped. thinking is with an intersectional lens this could support this recommendation complementing and pulling other streams together  Individual departments are also doing much to tackle inequalities e.g. the Fairer	I&C	GPH ECM



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			6Economy Plan highlights reducing economic inequality in the City as a top priority and the recently established Safer Neighbourhood Board, led my MPS and supported by the council help to address local policing priorities.		
6	Look for ways to ensure social value is secured across commissioning and procurement and supporting community objectives with an employment policy which prioritises local people into apprenticeships and jobs, especially where this offers career/skills progression	Work in progress	Our Responsible Procurement and Commissioning strategy (RPC) sets a clear framework to guide our work with suppliers on community wealth building to deliver responsible business and sustainable development.	F&R	GPH
7	Encourage co-production with the community as a means of engagement to create joint solutions.	Work in progress	Work is underway to develop a Charter for Community Participation which will set out the councils commitment to collaboration and coproduction with Westminster's communities. A consultation on the Charter has recently closed, the information gathered through the consultation will be used to produce a draft charter and a committee, including residents and community leaders, will be established to develop what happens next.	I&C	
<b>Community, Family and Youth Hubs</b>					
8	Capitalise on the opportunity to deliver new family and community hub at Third Avenue in Queen's Park and delivering this project should be accelerated together with looking at potential meanwhile uses that show the way for the final project.	Work in progress	For clarity the hub at Third Avenue is a Family Hub and work is underway to deliver it.	I&C	F&R
<b>Poverty, Hardship and the Cost-of-living crisis</b>					
9	Follow up its work so far on the cost-of-living crisis with a more detailed poverty reduction strategy including an annual report to the Council on poverty and low income in the borough. This report should also cover debt and debt management, enforcement in respect of rent and Council Tax (policies and practice, numbers) and applications to/assistance provided by discretionary council funds	Consider in more detail	Some early scoping work has been undertaken around a poverty reduction strategy and the Commission's recommendations regarding an annual report to full Council will be considered in more detail.  The council is working with UCL to undertake a comprehensive review of poverty in Westminster. This is to establish the need for a poverty reduction strategy. The next stage is to be agreed but is likely to include an analysis of poverty related statistics, followed by a qualitative evaluation of existing programmes and projects delivered by the council.	I&C	
10	Adopt a proactive data-based approach to targeting its hardship schemes and other types of support to families and households in the greatest need	Work in progress	The COL Working Group already uses data to recommend how best to direct COL support but will look at options on how best to embed a targeted approach. The Rent Support Fund, managed by Housing Services already works on a targeted basis, engaging with council tenant who are either on partial benefits or receiving no benefits.	IC / GPH	
11	Review the operation of credit providers in the borough to ensure that bad credit providers are dissuaded from operating locally, and to consider the feasibility of supporting credit unions	Consider in more detail	The council support the work of the London Mutual Credit Union. More consideration would have to be given as to how any review would work in practice however there is a complimentary piece of work being undertaken currently on how the council can promote access to financial advice including advice on responsible lending.	I&C	
12	Review its policy approach to promoting the London Living Wage with employers in the city to make it as effective as possible.	Agree	The Fairer Economy Plan 2023 sets out how it will work with the Living Wage Foundation and local employers to design and deliver a programme of events and activities aimed at promoting London Living Wage careers in Westminster.  ASCH pays the London Living Wage in all of its homecare contracts with this	GPH	

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			commitment further cemented through the Ethical Care Charter, which will be central to how ASCH will ensure staff are compensated fairly.		
13	Ensure that the support available on its cost-of-living hub is communicated in a wide range of languages and also that front line staff in the Council and partner voluntary and statutory organisations are made fully aware of the available support.	Work in progress	<p>To date the Communications team at Westminster has created translated options of Winter in the City Maps, cost of living postcards and posters that signpost people to available help.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to develop a more systematic approach to translations across council communications, to ensure that we are confident we are reaching all audiences. This will involve ongoing close working with communities' colleagues to ensure we are sharing info with local partners.</p>	I&C	
14	Carry out a more comprehensive audit of services across the sign-posting, advice, advocacy and representation sectors and how they serve local communities. This should include examining the need for open access services on the Advice Shop model, tribunal and appeal representation and looking at the potential for Refernet or other platforms to offer a more seamless service. The audit should also examine variations in need, take up, and outcomes across different communities to identify those who are finding it difficult access advice and measures to address this	Work in progress	<p>An audit of advice services provided in Westminster is currently underway, with a report due shortly. The Council runs advice shops in multiple community locations at community centres, libraries and foodbanks. Further support is being developed through the expansion of the Westminster CAB contract. Thought needs to be given to how the council audits people who need advice services but don't attend.</p> <p>ASCH is also reviewing its Information and Advice service, which includes customers' feedback about their experiences using the service.</p>	I&C	Communities
15	Approach DWP at a senior level to agree a collaborative work programme on managing the Universal Credit migration process and ensuring that the move between benefits does not trigger arrears/enforcement action where this can be avoided	Agree	<p>The move to Universal Credit (UC) for existing housing benefit recipients is due to start in April 2024. DWP is yet to decide how this will be implemented. For example, they could adopt a regional approach or start with defined client groups. We do know that individuals receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) will not move to UC until 2028/29 giving reassurance lessons will have been learned before DWP approaches the most vulnerable group. Move to UC is a fixed agenda item on regular consultation meetings DWP holds with the local government associations including London Councils. The associations continue to lobby for a role in the process that will help safeguard our most vulnerable residents.</p>	F&R	
16	Improve support for workforce development in the advice sector, including developing an apprenticeship scheme with its partners for local residents to gain the skills they need to fulfil advice sector roles in future and more support for volunteers including pathways into employment for them	Agree	<p>This recommendation will be considered as part of the ongoing review into advice services. To date the council has funded several pilots focusing on traineeships, apprenticeships and volunteer development to create more workforce development for advice services. A proposal for how we develop this and what funding might be needed will be included as part of the review.</p>	I&C	
17	Explore to identify levels of need and what support could best be provided for young people from school age into young adulthood. Young people are less likely to access formal advice services but face specific challenges, like mobile phone debts, and these can impact negatively on mental health	Work in progress	<p>ASC is working with key partners in children's services, health and education to ensure all young people who will need adult social care support are identified early to enable a smooth transition from children's into adult's services. The provision of information and advice to young people and their families is an essential part of this process. The 'Preparing for Adulthood' standard operation protocol is currently being reviewed and updated to further strengthen pathways between agencies.</p>	ASCH	Childrens

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			The establishment of the Transitional Safeguarding Steering Group aims to look at multi agency approaches to transitional safeguarding and aims to further develop good practice within children’s and adults services and key stakeholders across the bi-borough.		
Early years provision					
18	Conduct and maintain a full audit of provision across all early years sectors- public, private and voluntary, as information is patchy. We need a better understanding of who is using which provision, where and at what cost. This audit should also cover pre-natal services from conception to the end of year one, to establish how to improve the coordination of services, especially those delivered by GPs, Midwives, Health Visitors and the Council	Agree	<p>We conduct an annual survey for all early years providers and schools across different sectors. This collects information on cost, availability and accessibility. The responses from the survey inform our annual childcare sufficiency assessment and is publicised on the Family Information Service. Our survey response rate, at 60%, is higher than the London average and has improved in recent years. We will work with the sector to increase the response rate and ensure a range of channels are available to support this.</p> <p>We have also conducted a detailed audit of services across the 0-5 pathway. This enabled us to identify opportunities to strengthen the links across services within maternity, health visiting and beyond. Ongoing coordination of our partnership offer is overseen by the Pre-birth to five board chaired jointly by Children's Services, Public Health and CLCH. We will work with partners to explore opportunities to create a Best Start Local Offer which will provide a clearer digital overview of services available locally.</p>	CS	
19	Work with key voluntary sector partners to carry out research into the barriers to take up of the existing offer for working parents, returners and low income families not in work, across different communities, and develop appropriate targeted promotional activity to increase take up, including the use of ‘Childcare Champions’	Work in progress	We have a well established outreach offer for our Family Hubs delivered by Family Lives, this is supplemented by additional outreach capacity through our Family Navigators and Community Champions. The Family Information Service and Funding Teams also carry out outreach work to promote the offers amongst professionals and families. This network of community resource has a key focus on supporting families to navigate and take up early years provision. The network meets regularly to share feedback on parental concerns and identify actions to improve take up, for example we have developed childcare videos in community languages. This will continue to be a priority area and further consideration will be given to channels of targeted promotional activity.	CS	
20	Set a target for increasing participation by parents not in work for health or similar reasons, to ensure the children of economically inactive parents are not excluded and report on this annually	Consider in more detail	We do not currently have the data available to enable us to cross-match take up of childcare places with data on economically inactive parents. The Digital & Innovation team and Strategy & Intelligence are collaborating on a wider data governance project, to establish the right data gateways, infrastructure and permissions for data matching, and will pursue this topic as part of the product pipeline.	CS	S&I, D&I
21	Publish an assessment of needs and provision for SEND children in each early years age cohort so as to design a future service model, accessible in both the north and south of the borough	Work in progress	Our annual sufficiency assessment collects information on the SEND offer and take up locally. We will continue to gather this information to inform strategic planning. Through this process we have identified a gap in provision in the South of the borough and plans are being developed to increase the range of provision through new nursery and school partnerships.	CS	
22	Support early years providers with the delivery of part time places, including for parents who want full day provision but only for part of the week	Work in progress	The Early Years service offers a range of support to providers to develop childcare models which are financially viable and are matched to local need. This includes individual advisory sessions and forums to support business planning and review service delivery models. These will continue and will be particularly important to support the transition linked to childcare reforms.	CS	
23	Identify pressure points arising from the extended childcare offer in the budget, to	Consider in more detail	Whilst the Local Authority has no powers to enforce childcare ratios beyond those set out in statute we recognise the commissions concerns and will	CS	

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	ensure that children of poorer households are not in care settings with a lower ratio of staff per child than 1 to 4 (or as is age appropriate)		continue to closely monitor the impact of the government's extended childcare offer as part of our sufficiency planning.		
24	Work with London Early Years Foundation on the development of the Early Years apprentice model for the next 10 years.	Agree	We agree that the development of an apprenticeship model could be beneficial in supporting recruitment challenges in the sector and the DfE is similarly proposing developments in this area. We note that the recommendation suggests working with LEYF but would recommend that this needs to be extended across the sector.	CS	
<b>Wraparound and Holiday Services</b>					
25	Support the Young Westminster Foundation in maintaining a comprehensive, up to date directory of wraparound and holiday schemes, with numbers, prices, and access/eligibility	Work in progress	<p>The Family Information (FIS) team maintains an up to date list of wraparound and holiday provision.</p> <p>Schools complete an annual survey to share this data with the LA, but the response rate is not 100%, so data is only partial. The information is included in the childcare sufficiency assessment.</p> <p>Information regarding wraparound care and holiday provision is advertised on the FIS website (under individual schools' pages). To compliment this the FIS also links to the Young Westminster Foundation 'Our City' pages which the Council updates with Holiday Activity Fund programmes, working in partnership with the Young Westminster Foundation.</p>	CS	
26	Carry out an assessment by ward of the numbers and circumstances of children who would benefit, so consideration can be given to supporting schools willing but unable to offer such a service.	Work in progress	Whilst we have data regarding pupils who are eligible for FSM/Pupil Premium, we do not have a clear understanding of families' needs in relation to wraparound care and holiday provision. Surveys have been sent out to families regarding this aspect as part of the 'Out of school Provision Hubs' work we have been doing with schools and parents' answers will be analysed. This will inform our next steps/model of delivery.	CS	
<b>Provision for children and young people</b>					
27	Provide long-term confidence for voluntary youth service providers to enable them to plan evening and holiday provision with sufficient lead in time	Work in progress	The DfE have approved the establishment of annual commitments for the Holiday Activity Fund, this has allowed multi-year SLAs which are now in place. The Council has an established budget for youth services and SLAs in place to provide confidence around funding sustainability. The youth sector have also received additional £536k funding through the recent Fairer Westminster budget setting process.	CS	
28	Liaise with providers over the provision of transport where necessary, so young people at risk/fearing street violence can participate and ensure that youth hub provision is accessible across all areas of the city	Work in progress	Some youth clubs already have their own minibuses or share minibuses. Clubs may choose to extend this offer through the additional Council funding they are now receiving. The Council is also working with youth clubs to ensure that young people at contingency hotels are able to access provision safely as part of HAF.	CS	
29	Ensure sufficient capacity to deliver a comprehensive youth offer across the city, with particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged wards, with an immediate priority being to meet needs in Westbourne	Work in progress	<p>The Council has also agreed an additional £536K per year for youth services. The Holiday Activity and Food is intended for families in receipt of Free School Meals and take place in areas of high deprivation. This is targeted to most disadvantaged wards. The Council will continue to work with the Young Westminster Foundation and wider youth sector to ensure that the offer meets the needs of children across the city, particularly those from most disadvantaged wards.</p> <p>City Lions also focuses provision on most disadvantaged wards, particularly working with schools in the most disadvantaged wards.</p>	CS	

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30	Investigate more ways for the voice and views of young people to be taken into account in commissioning youth services but also in decision-making across the Council.	Work in progress	The Council has increased the youth services budget from £500K to just over £1M, part of which has increased the capacity of the Youth Council and also established, in partnership with Young Westminster Foundation, a youth ambassadors programme; both of which will ensure the voice of young people is heard in decision making. In running grant programmes and procurements, the Council will continue to explore ways of ensuring that young people are able to participate in engagement and co-production processes; evaluation of bids as well as monitoring of projects and services.	CS	I&C
31	Working with Young Westminster Foundation, PDT and others, aim to build parental confidence in the youth service while looking to develop alternative models of your provision for example in schools.	Work in progress	The Council has partnered with the Young Westminster Foundation, wider youth sector and VCS providers to deliver the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme. Through the targeted communications campaign linked to the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) offer we have seen a rise in the numbers attending youth settings to access this. Our recent parental satisfaction survey linked to the HAF reinforces the high satisfaction with the programme. The Council's Early Help and the Young Westminster Foundation have a strong strategic relationship and have developed navigation and outreach capacity (e.g. securing outreach for families in contingency hotels via a local charity). A number of the existing youth hubs already offer an estate based outreach offer. We will continue to explore ways to increase confidence with parents in accessing youth services.	CS	
32	Audit the delivery of, and issues facing, supplementary schools in Westminster, building on the work by YWF and John Lyons Trust with a view to providing further support to them.	Work in progress	The DfE supported a previous pilot focussing on Supplementary Schools and identification of unregistered schools. A key partner is the well-established NRCSE (National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education). We will explore ways to map current Supplementary School provision linking with the NRCSE, YWF and John Lyons Trust to promote ongoing access to advice /guidance /support regarding a code of safe practice and quality assurance	CS	
33	Address the needs of the cohort of young adults over the age for youth services but at particular risk from gang involvement/serious youth violence, identifying barriers to employability, skills, training, and enterprise for 18-25s. This would include continuing support for programmes such as Helping Hands Serious Youth Violence programme, and responding to insights from young people gained from the 18-25 study	Work in progress	<p>The Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan 23/24 commits to tackling youth violence and offending by providing change programmes that support our young people and their families together with our communities and partners. Public Health will also soon launch a Children's and Young People Drugs Strategy outlining how best to support this cohort.</p> <p>The Helping Hands project continues to deliver across the North of the Borough and is in the process of delivering a youth steering group, supported by our partners in the Young Westminster Foundation. Discussions are now taking place with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to extend funding for a further year and to replicate the project in the Church Street area. A Community Capacity Building application was submitted to the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and was successful, the funding will support the Helping Hands Project expand into the Church Street area and will be carried out over a 12 month period.</p>	ECM / CS	GPH
34	Facilitate additional capacity around consultation with/involvement by young people in service design, utilising the YWF needs analysis due to launch in autumn 2023	Work in progress	As part of service design, improvement and evaluation, Children's Services are continue to involve children through engagement and co-design. The Council has recently invested further in support and funding for the Youth Council and YWF's Youth Voice coordinator to amplify the voice of young people. Engagement and co-design is a core principle in the Children and Young People's Plan (a document co-produced with children) and the Council will continue to ensure that the voice of the child is central. There is always more	CS	

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			that can be done to engage with children and young people, the Council will continue to work with the YWF and partners on this.		
Increasing access to and participation in sports and leisure					
35	Prior to the negotiation of the leisure services relet undertake a community consultation programme with different user groups (schools, faith communities, parents, young people, women, older users) into access to sports and leisure, so as to better understand the issues regarding costs, booking systems, how community hours are utilised, the demand for different activities and the balance between organised activities and individual recreation	Agree	A review of community groups access to spaces is already underway, which aims to audit current spaces, current provision, gaps and provide recommendations to improve access	I&C	GPH
36	Ensure maximising social value is given due weight in strategic leisure plans and procurement processes	Agree	Delivering social value is a key focus of the responsible Commissioning and Procurement Strategy, which supports community need through increasing contractor collaboration on tackling poverty and inequality in Westminster, increasing supply chain equality, diversity and inclusion and increasing partnership with contractors to strengthen local communities. The council will continue to look at how delivering social value can be better supported and will take on board best practice from external organisations such as the London Responsible Procurement Network (LRPN).	I&C	F&R
37	Conduct a regular audit of community sports provision and build relationships with community sports providers, to learn from their experiences with accessing affordable appropriate facilities. This should include an annual event with providers	Agree	Through ActiveWestminster Partnership meetings, ActiveWestminster Network Meetings (North, Central and South) and ActiveWestminster Mark, clubs development support feedback from community sports providers will be gathered to continue inform service delivery. There is also an opportunity in line with our review of the leisure contract to look at specific borough wide engagement with current users of our services as well as those who do not.	I&C	
38	Publish and keep up to date a directory of local providers, services and contact details, and hold an annual community sports conference supported by councillors	Agree	There is already a Directory in place. We will consider with Providers in terms of GDPR.	I&C	
39	Review regularly all leisure service S106 agreements to ensure full compliance	Agree	Reviews already take place as BAU.	I&C	GPH
40	Maintain focus on the project looking at designing and supporting spaces where girls can feel safe using outdoor spaces for activity and leisure.	Agree	Scoping of project on Westbourne Green Open Space has begun with female focused group aim to be delivered in 2023, to support with design.	I&C	GPH
Safety					
41	Continue to press for more neighbourhood police officers to be deployed throughout the city	Work in progress	We continue to engage with the MPS on the importance of neighbourhood policing.	I&C	ECM
42	Identify resources and a plan for improvements to the public realm, playgrounds and street furniture focused on disadvantaged wards which have not previously seen much of this type of investment and review environmental	Work in progress	Work is already underway to bring forward improvements, including the roll out outdoor games areas across the city and the delivery of additional hire bike schemes in the north of the borough where availability is poor. The council is also developing proposals to roll out a school superzone with Edward Wilson school in Westbourne this would be delivered in partnership with school staff, pupils, parents, community groups, businesses, Council officers and local councillors.	I&C	ECM

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	contracts to ensure there is equity in delivery across the city		A Schools Superzone is an area around a school that enables children in the most deprived areas to grow up in a healthy and safe neighbourhood where they can play safely, breathe clean air, be active, enjoy a healthy diet and thrive.		
43	Monitor the impact of initiatives which increase the council's presence on estates and in the most deprived neighbourhoods, and report on whether this increases a) ASB reporting b) take up of mediation and c) how these council initiatives are viewed by residents of different demographics (such as age and ethnicity), to ensure they are increasing a sense of security and agency for all residents and not inadvertently re-enforcing existing inequities or biases	Work in progress	Housing have established a range of Housing surgeries across the borough and are attending CAB Advice+ sessions. Housing is increasing the number of Housing Officers working directly with Council residents. Housing is increasing the number of Housing Service Centres/Estate offices to make our services more accessible to residents. Housing is running an Estate Security Patrol pilot focussed on four estates over a period of 12 months. Housing is seeking feedback from relevant Residents Associations about the pilot. Mediation is a service that the Housing ASB team can refer residents to. The Housing ASB team monitor take up and effectiveness of the service.		GPH
44	Examine ways to improve and speed up the resolution of disputes which involve properties in different tenures/operated by different landlords	Work in progress	<p>ECM: (Public Health funded) Work to improve housing conditions for our most vulnerable across the private rental sector and houses of multiple occupation - The Private Sector Housing team continues to regulate conditions in the sector responding to complaints from residents concerning poor housing conditions, and through operating a licensing scheme for houses in multiple occupation across the borough.</p> <p>Enforcement work has ramped up significantly in 22/23 with 30 Financial Penalties issues to non-compliance landlords and 5 prosecutions. The service has responded to 1011 service requests concerning poor conditions from renters this financial year, while the Additional Licensing scheme for HMOs launched in 2021 continues to show a positive response and higher number of applications than predicted with 1844 live licences and 280 being processed. 381 inspections of high risk HMO's have been conducted. Quarterly PRS Stakeholder Meetings held to discuss current issues, trends and concerns within the sector.</p> <p>ASB Strategy: Agreement secured to form a RSL working group with the 13 largest RSLs in borough including Westminster Housing, to run in parallel to the ASB Strategic Group who will identify and deliver the WCC ASB Strategy action plan. To be launched in Summer 2023. The focus of the group will be to develop tenure neutral best practice responses across ASB investigation and case management, prevention and early intervention; Victim support and advocacy offers; identification and capture of core data sets, supported through the SWP action plan.</p> <p>Housing: We are putting in place a strategic approach to Housing Associations and RPs that will better facilitate the ability to discuss areas of concern and issues, more broadly than specific case by case issues. Meanwhile, our Community Hubs, with their area-based focus on improve local services to residents, will be a key way for us to have issues reported and will facilitate a partnership way of working with Housing Associations. We will be also be the different processes we can use, such as potentially revitalising a Sublet Protocol with Housing Associations/RPs that sets out a stronger mechanism for escalating issues such as ASB and repairs.</p>	ECM	GPH

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45	Set a timetable to report on the equalities impact assessment of the Anti-Social Behaviour strategy, to include a breakdown by age cohort, so it is possible to monitor the different experiences of those affected by area, age, gender, and ethnicity. This requires improved and standardised data which the Council aims to provide but is not currently available	Consider in more detail	Work is underway to deliver Safer Westminster Partnership's action plan workshop for 2023/24, and recommendations will filter through to the WCC ASB strategy action plan with a dedicated data rolling action across the 5 year duration.	I&C	GPH / ECM
46	Deliver the promised improved management of Maida Hill square, identify lessons which may be applicable to other neighbourhoods	Agree	The North Paddington Programme focuses on reducing borough wide social-economic and health inequalities, in collaboration with community stakeholders.	GPH	
<b>Closing the life and health expectancy gap</b>					
47	Using the framework of #2035 monitor and evaluate inequalities in health status and life limiting conditions as well as life expectancy, geographically and with reference to ethnicity, gender, and LGBTQIA+. Reducing inequalities in life expectancy can only be achieved via reducing inequalities in health status and disability first	Work in progress	To improve the health and wellbeing of our residents we must embed a whole council approach, to address the wider determinant of health. Based on a shared understanding of local need, and agreed set of priorities, we will work across the council and with key partners to promote and protect health, to get the right services and activities for our residents, with a specific focus on prevention and early intervention. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently out for consultation and has as a core focus reducing health inequalities. #2035 will start to be rolled out formally over the next few months, we expect the outcomes of this to support a more strategic approach to this work, embedding the principles of collaboration, co-production learning and evaluating as we go forward.	I&C	Communities
48	Ensure that the principles behind #2035 are reflected in the level of funding and support given to the voluntary and community sector	Work in progress	Following the publications of the JSNA on health inequalities in autumn 2023, embed the recommendations which will include an enhanced investment in the voluntary and community sector to reach residents and neighbourhoods with the greatest needs. The community investment strategy also is underpinned by #2035	I&C	Communities
49	Ensure that community research into barriers to health addresses lower levels of involvement by men and makes recommendations to increase men's participation	Work in progress	To ensure more robust data capture, we will engage with these resident groups to capture knowledge and community insight to develop a dynamic understanding of the barriers and their experiences, to shape services and initiatives.	ASCH	
50	Consider ways of reporting the findings of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on health inequalities for global majority communities to ensure awareness amongst councillors and in the community	Work in progress	The JSNA has been adapted into a 'Borough Story' format so that it is easy to access, understand and update in the future.	I&C/ ASCH	Communities
51	Make tackling loneliness a priority for the council, with a strand of activity aimed specifically at reducing loneliness amongst young people	Work in progress	Penfold older people's hub is being expanded to increase reach and availability including the dementia choir; also utilising learning from the PH funded mental health youth workers initiative to develop a model for supporting young people's mental health.	ASCH	
52	Ensure there is a specific strand of health and wellbeing work focused on homeless households and those at risk of homelessness	Work in progress	Public Health is using its grant to fund a case worker nurse for clients on the homelessness pathway. There is also a wider commitment to improving the service experience and outcomes for the most disadvantaged people who	GPH	



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	with strengthened requirements for signposting and referring homeless households to support services		present to our services by connecting services up and making sure all policies, services and decisions are geared towards improving the best outcomes for our clients and customers.		
53	As part of its preventative and targeted approach, identify and focus on some small areas with a substantial private rented sector serving lower income households to identify needs- examples include the Bell Street area of Church Street and Fernhead/Ashmore/Portnall/Bravington roads in Queen's Park.	Work in progress	<p>Public Health funding has been used to target the improvement of housing conditions for our most vulnerable across the private rental sector and houses of multiple occupation. The service continues to respond to concerns concerning poor conditions from renters, the Additional Licensing scheme for HMOs, launched in 2021 continues to perform well and there is continuing engagement with PRS Stakeholders to discuss current issues, trends and concerns within the sector.</p> <p>The Private Rented Sector Charter which is currently under development will outline required standards for, amongst other things, PRS housing and landlord responsibilities and aims to inform and empower tenants to know their rights and signpost towards advice and support to secure resolution when standards not met.</p>	I&C	ECM