

MINUTES OF THE SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 22 May 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Juliet Campbell (Chair), James Rathbone (Vice-Chair), Sophie Davis, Carl Handley, Eva Stamirowski and James-J Walsh

APOLOGIES: Councillors Liam Curran, Jim Mallory and Stephen Penfold

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Chris Best (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for Health and Adult Social Care), Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney (Head of Public Protection and Safety), Superintendent Andy Carter, Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Dr Catherine Mbema (Interim Director of Public Health) (London Borough of Lewisham), Andy Thomas (Cultural Development Manager), Camilla Biggs (SAIL Connections Manager) (Lewisham SAIL), Iris Till (Positive Ageing Council), Alice Groux (Age UK), Bridgit Sam-Bailey (Lewisham Pensioners' Forum) and Tracey Jarrett (Lewisham Pensioners Forum)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2019

1.1 RESOLVED:

That the minutes be agreed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 Councillor James Walsh declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 4 and 5 as he worked at London South Bank University.

2.2 Councillor Sophie Davis declared an interest in item 4 as she was a Council appointee on the board of Voluntary Services Lewisham and item 5 as she worked for the Behavioural Insight Team and the Metropolitan Police were clients of the organisation.

3. Response to Referrals from this Committee - Lewisham Disability Coalition

3.1 The Chair introduced the response and members of the Committee agreed to note the report.

3.2 The Chair announced that regarding the Committee's referral made at their meeting on 12th March on the item "Provision for the LGBT+ Community in Lewisham: 6-month update"; the response from Mayor and Cabinet was that "The Committee's comments be noted, and the recommendations considered in another setting". The Committee agreed they did not need a further formal response to this.

3.3 The Chair noted that she had asked that the Cabinet Member for the Community Sector be invited to attend the meeting of Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on the 16th July.

3.3 **RESOLVED:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the report author for the report on Disability Provision in Lewisham, scheduled for the meeting on 9th October, include the following in the report to Committee:
 - The timeline for the accessibility commission, who will be responsible for it, and details of the costs and how it will be funded.
3. That the Committee do not require a formal response to their referral made on 12th March 2019 on the item "Provision for the LGBT+ Community in Lewisham: 6-month update".

4. **Adult isolation and services for the elderly**

- 4.1 Catherine Mbema, Interim Director of Public Health presented the report to the Committee. During the discussion, the following key points were raised:
- **Members of the Committee requested information on the numbers of older people in Lewisham receiving a form of intervention to prevent loneliness.**
 - The intervention strategies aligned different target groups including suicide prevention. It was recognised that men were at most risk of suicide and the age group 25-44 was the highest risk group within this.
 - There were different referral routes for intervention such as through GPs and through other community groups. Work was on-going to try to improve links between organisations and monitoring.
- 4.2 Councillor Chris Best, Deputy Mayor, presented to the Committee and highlighted the different work that was on-going. During her presentation and in the discussion that followed, the following key points were made:
- There was positive work on-going linked to the adult isolation and services to the elderly work. This included: presentations at local assemblies; referrals; individual Councillors reaching-out; free swimming for over 60s; outdoor gyms; healthy walks programme; dementia friends programme.
 - Meet me at the Albany was hugely successful and was expanding and also being replicated in Downham.
- 4.3 Camilla Biggs and Alice Groux from Age UK presented to the Committee. During their presentation, the following key points were highlighted:
- Age UK worked with the public health team and ward assemblies. They had supported 967 people.

- Through the SAIL Connections pathway (Safe and Independent Living) there had been 1435 referrals.
- Age UK worked closely with the Council and were now based at Laurence House with the Adult Social Care Team which facilitated a joined up approach to information sharing and support.
- Around 50% of their clients were over 50. Another key group was supporting people with the transition from children's to adult's social care services.
- Social isolation could be caused by mental ill health, alcohol and drugs misuse, mobility issues, sight loss, hearing problems and conditions such as dementia, as well as issues such as living away from family and friends. There could be a long waiting list for support.
- Age UK looked at gaps in service provision and strengths each year and challenges for different community groups and minorities.

4.4 Iris Till, Chair Positive Ageing Council presented to the Committee. During the presentation the following key points were raised:

- Isolation and loneliness could be invisible and the Positive Ageing Council was always focussed on how to reach out and engage and identify where there was a problem.
- The group was working closely with Council officers such the Cultural Development Officer and had designed a programme called "table talk".
- Thinking about venues and where to engage was important. There was the potential to include; libraries; pubs; supermarkets; health centres.
- The organisation was also running focus groups about Lewisham becoming an "age-friendly borough".
- Lewisham Council had a number of positive initiatives such as the free swimming and gym for over 60s and the Council should be proud of this.

4.5 Bridgit Sam Bailey and Tracey Jarrett from Lewisham Pensioners Forum presented to the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- There was a distinction between loneliness and being isolated.
- Issues such as relocation could be very unsettling and distressing for people.
- Barriers to access to services for older people could be a challenge including transport to get there being problematic or booking and contact systems being confusing.
- In terms of access to public transport this could include not being offered seats on buses making journeys too challenging and lack of access for users with a disability.
- The forum was developing a new strategy and vision and was combining organising visits and outings with on-going projects and a campaigning role.
- This included a number of projects such as: pensioners' parliament; friendship quilt; healthy walks; yoga; digital drop-ins and more.
- The Forum was working in partnership with other groups and was focused on reaching out and collaborating.

4.6 In the discussion that followed the presentations, the following key points were raised:

- None of the three organisations provided an advocacy service. Age UK provided information, advice and guidance but did not represent individuals.
- It would be positive to have a hospital advocacy service for vulnerable individuals.
- The Council's Cultural Development Officer worked with all the funded organisation relating to age-friendly and dementia-friendly activities.
- New mothers could be vulnerable to isolation and loneliness. Work was being done with health visitors to link up to vulnerable new parents. There was a Mindful Mums programme that people could be referred to.
- A member of the Committee highlighted that partnerships with universities could be used to support advocacy for vulnerable individuals such as through law clinics at universities.
- Age UK working with Adult Social Care was helping to avoid people "falling through the gaps" by not meeting thresholds for adult social care but were vulnerable and needed extra support. Deterioration was tracked where possible on a case by case basis.
- Members of the committee felt there was a lot of positive work in Lewisham that needed to be celebrated.
- A member of the Committee asked regarding additional information appearing in Council publications and on-line and more work on recruiting for befriending schemes. The Deputy Mayor responded that there was lots of information online including a social prescribing directory. She would use the information from the meeting and the comments raised when looking further at these issues. She had noted in particular information regarding law clinics and befriending schemes.
- A member of the Committee felt that the Chair of the Transport Liaison Committee may be interested in the issues regarding isolation from barriers to accessing public transport and might wish to invite the Positive Ageing Council and Lewisham Disability Forum to a future meeting.

4.7 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the representatives from Age UK, the Positive Ageing Council and Lewisham Pensioners Forum and the Deputy Mayor be thanked for attending and providing evidence to the Committee.
- (2) That the positive work being carried out in Lewisham should be celebrated.
- (3) That the Deputy Mayor review the information available on the Council website in relation to services of relevance to adult isolation, in particular information regarding law clinics and befriending schemes.
- (4) That the Chair of the Transport Liaison Committee consider inviting the Positive Ageing Council and Lewisham Disability Forum to a future

5. Update from the local Police and Fire Service

- 5.1 Superintendent Andy Carter gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which will be included in the agenda documentation. During the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:
- Members of the Committee were invited to take part in community ride with the Police should they be interested.
 - Catford and Catford Hill Police Stations would be closed within the next 12-24 months to make way for new Police “hubs”. The Police were in the process of identifying a new site for the Catford hub.
 - 600 arrests had been reported in the National media around County line activity. This was not linked to Lewisham.
 - The Police had a notification protocol around significant incidents. There was not capacity to notify everybody about everything and at times, incidents may appear on social media but would not meet the notification criteria. The protocol involved the Police advising the Head of Public Protection and Safety who would then inform stakeholders. Councillors could contact the Head of Public Protection and Safety if they had a particular concern.
 - Superintendent Carter highlighted that the process should be two-way and he would be really keen to hear back from community leaders on what was happening in the area, whether there were community concerns around a particular incident or event for example.
 - Capacity within the Council may be considered further with future restructuring.
 - There was no knowledge of a Lewisham connection to the 600 county lines arrests which had recently been publicised in the national media. However the Committee heard that an investigation commenced in 2013 in Lewisham on County Lines had recently resulted in successful prosecution under the modern day slavery legislation.
 - The complaints data for stop and search was available on the Metropolitan Police publication scheme website. A Committee member felt it would be helpful if it was more transparent and available so people could easily have access to, and understand, the data. **The Scrutiny Manager would send the link to members of the Committee.**
 - There were vacancies in key roles within the BCU which had an impact on performance. They were working hard to minimise this and there were new staff coming in as well. The change to the BCU from the previous 3 borough format had reduced the number of posts by approximately 100. There is now approximately 1460 posts in the BCU.
 - Members of the Committee requested additional details on the unconscious bias training delivered by the Police. They felt this would be useful to assess standard and quality. **Superintendent**

Carter would look into this and provide more details to the committee.

- The commitment to the new model was 2 dedicated ward officers, and a PCSO in each ward. There were times when they may briefly help out on a neighbouring ward which was practical policing and not seen as a problem. There were times when they may be called away from their ward. This had previously been limited to the Notting Hill Carnival and New Year's Eve, or any exceptional circumstance. The Police had not foreseen the huge resource need for Extinction Rebellion protests and this had had an impact. The Police tried as far as possible to take the ward officers last and for as little time as possible to minimise any impact. **The data on how often this happened was available on the MOPAC website.**
- The complaints data is analysed within the Head Quarters strand of the BCU. They looked for trends or anomalies. For example if an officer was subject to three or more complaints within 12 months they would become part of the complaints intervention scheme.
- Sometimes simple home security prevention measures could be improved to reduce burglary. It could be useful to do publicity such as at a session at a local assembly.

5.2 The Chair requested that written questions for the Borough Commander for the London Fire Brigade be agreed by the Committee and the Scrutiny Manager would seek a response and update the Committee.

5.3 **RESOLVED:**

1. That Superintendent Andy Carter be thanked for attending and presenting to the Committee and Martin Corbett, Borough Commander for London Fire Brigade be thanked for his report.
2. **That Superintendent Carter provide additional information on the unconscious bias training undertaken by the Police.**
3. **That the report from the Borough Commander for Lewisham, London Fire Brigade, be forwarded to Cllr Muldoon as Chair of Healthier Communities Select Committee and Councillor Bernard as Chair of Housing Select Committee.**
4. **That the self-neglect and hoarding policy be provided to the Committee once it has been published.**
5. **That the results of the HMICFRS inspection of Lewisham Fire Brigade be shared with the Committee once they have been published.**
6. **For the next report from the London Fire Brigade it would be useful to include details of non-fire related work such as support given in road traffic accidents in the borough. It would also be useful to have details of the long term trends rather than just the 12-month rolling trend. This could be compared to national figures where possible.**

6. Select Committee work programme

6.1 Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager presented the work programme report to the Committee. During the discussion, the following key points were highlighted:

- The Committee had previously agreed the review should include looking at: the Council's employee profile and staff survey results; how equalities is embedded across the Council including organisations funded by the Council; Equalities Impact Assessments including looking at what best practice is and how they are carried out in Lewisham; and looking at data and disclosure rates to see whether improvements need and can be made. Each Directorate should be asked to highlight the key issues in their area. **Members requested this extract from the minutes on 30th April be circulated to Committee members.**
- There was a discussion as to whether data should be broken down by strand of equalities, it was felt that it could be problematic to present data in a method that could appear to be promoting "a hierarchy of inequality". It could be useful to consider what was lost and what was gained from going to a single equalities strategy.
- Best practice examples would be included in the scope.
- It would be useful to understand what the residents of the borough see as their key issues in terms of equalities. This could be through the new call for evidence on the Council's website. Third sector organisations would also be included in the witnesses.

6.2 **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the extract from the minutes of the 30th April 2019 highlighting details of what was requested to be included in the scope for the Committee's in-depth review in equalities, be e-mailed to all members of the Committee.

7. Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet

7.1 The Chair highlighted that there had been no referrals at the meeting.

7.2 The Chair highlighted that Business Panel had now amended and agreed the referral from the last meeting of Safer Stronger communities on Equalities. There would not be a formal response to Safer Stronger on this.

7.3 **Minutes for this meeting should be sent to the Chair of the Transport Liaison Committee to highlight the issues regarding isolation from barriers to accessing public transport.**

7.4 **RESOLVED:**

There were no referrals to Mayor and Cabinet made at the meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

Chair:

Date:
