

Decisions of the Community Leadership and Libraries Committee

26 January 2022

Members Present:-

Councillor Reuben Thompstone (Chairman)
Councillor Lachhya Gurung (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Jennifer Grocock	Councillor Danny Rich
Councillor Helene Richman	Councillor Roberto Weeden-Sanz
Councillor Sara Conway	Councillor Zakia Zubairi
Councillor Charlie O-Macauley	

Also in attendance

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Nizza Fluss

1. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS (IF ANY)

Apologies were received from Councillor Nizza Fluss.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS (IF ANY)

Cllr Conway declared a non-pecuniary interest – that she is a Trustee of the Jewish Volunteering Network.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG) STRATEGY ANNUAL UPDATE

Tina McElligott presented the report and highlighted the setting out of activities in relation to domestic abuse over the previous quarter. It also highlights, that despite the restrictions due to the pandemic that the Council and Partners have been continuing to offer refuge accommodation and the learning provision.

The consultation on the strategy closed in December 2021 and the results of this will be shared on 8th March 2022 which coincides with International Women's Day. She expressed the importance of these results being shared as it is about changing cultures and making people aware of domestic violence which will be further promoted at the event being held at the Stone X Stadium.

Councillor Weeden-Sanz expressed concern at the repeat MARAC referrals. Ms McElligott confirmed that although concerning, it must be noted that these are now being reported as previously this was not the case and that we must also be careful with the narrative surrounding this as it may not necessarily be a negative.

Councillor Weeden-Sanz commented on the mutual perpetrator programme and noted that new referrals have dropped. Ms McElligott informed that the team have just gone through a recommissioning exercise for the perpetrator exercise and have not yet had the full year data made available because of the reporting a quarter early.

Councillor Weeden-Sanz also commented in relation to domestic abuse in the borough and despite the decrease in injury abuse as reported by the police, asked if those that are being reported are not turning into offences. Ms McElligott commented that a high proportion of offences are that of a verbal and emotional nature and the conviction rate for these incidents is lower in terms of charging.

Councillor Grocock thanked Ms McElligott and the team on the much-needed work and detailed report on the Domestic Violence Against Women Strategy and Annual Update.

Councillor Conway discussed the idea of holding a drop-in session for members as a place where they can potentially discuss difficult and complex cases relating to domestic violence, including any tips and training that the dedicated team can give members to assist constituents going forward. It was discussed for anonymous case studies to be shared amongst members of cases they have been made aware of. **ACTION: COUNCILLOR CONWAY**

Councillor O' Macaulay asked how effective consultation has been and confirmation that the numbers in the report are accurate. He also asked on reporting domestic abuse and where these cases originated from and if they potentially were related to housing issues. Ms McElligott commented that correlated factors, such as poverty, housing and immigration status are all looked and tracked for those women and men who are supported by the service and the facilities at the One Stop Shop assist with this support to the victims.

Councillor O'Macaulay asked how many consultations were sent out and how many the team received back. **ACTION: MS MCELLIGOTT**

Councillor Richman fully endorsed the report and asked if any work has taken place to tackle violence against women students and their experiences in student accommodation. Ms McElligott informed that her team have been engaging with the

universities to understand this as well as schools and colleges and noted that the government is running a plan to tackle attitudes towards sex and gender.

Councillor Richman asked what the actual definition of setting out the remit what the term domestic is. Ms McElligott advised that this is now defined in the new domestic abuse act which is very broad and includes everything from coercion to physical abuse and also includes people and girls being trafficked. There are some circumstances where the new act is not covered and it was agreed for Councillor Richman to meet with Ms McElligott to further discuss. **ACTION: Ms McElligott**

Cllr Zubairi express her thanks to the team for the report and asked what the process of launching the strategy will be. Ms McElligott informed that it would be formally launched on International Women's Day which takes place on 8 March 2022.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted:

The progress made by the Safer Communities Partnership on delivering the four priority objectives of the Barnet Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

8. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN

William Cooper, Deputy Head of Strategy presented his report and delivery plan update.

Mr Cooper reported that the strategy was approved in June 2021 and the report accounted for the first 6 months of activity and the priorities ahead for the next 6 months which covers a broad set of approaches. Mr Cooper highlighted one of the biggest achievements so far is an increase of funding and support for the Together Barnet Partnership as recognition of how we have grown throughout the pandemic. He continued that the Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and the food hub continues to grow from strength to strength with additional work taking place to understand and prevent food waste. An additional piece of work that is taking place is the consultation and engagement strategy which will be taken to the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting and will go into more detail on the consultation engagement process.

Cllr Grocock asked about the citizens panel and how this is put together. Mr Cooper informed that people will be recruited via a database which is refreshed regularly and will reflect Barnet's diverse borough which will be the responsibility of the Data Officer to recruit to the panel. This will be a virtual panel.

Cllr Conway asked for the wording within page 56 in relation to foodbanks to be reviewed and for the language to be changed. **ACTION: Mr Cooper**

Cllr Conway asked for the need to recognise volunteering and different community groups as well as faith organisations that we all hear about. Mr Cooper advised that there are lots of other volunteering sectors that do a lot of this type of work and the team we will attempt to quantify this where possible.

Cllr Conway asked what the role of the Health Champions will be and asked for committee members to be given information on the scope monitoring and evaluation of social contracts. Mr Cooper informed that the role of the health champions will be to look at aspects such as social and economic impacts related to the covid pandemic and that the wider picture of health and wellbeing will be picked up in this role.

Cllr Conway gave specific thanks on the work with Community Centres, and thanked Council Officers help and guidance.

Cllr Rich asked if updates will be given to the board twice a year and if the data officer will choose the citizens panel members at random. Mr Cooper informed that an update will be brought to the board twice a year and that the citizens panel will not necessarily meet however will have surveys and consultations to cover a wide range of topics.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted:

The update and progress made in delivering the Community Participation Strategy and the planned activities in the forthcoming months.

9. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the forward plan and agreed to cancel the meeting of 10 March 2022.

The Vice Chairman thanked the Chairman for his work on the committee and chairmanship for the last 4 years and all members of the committee concurred with this.

10. ANY ITEM(S) THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 7.51 pm