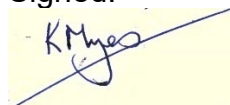


<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> We Make Camden Partnership Strategy	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Director of Participation, Partnerships and Communications	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b> Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee	<b>DATE</b> 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2024
<p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b></p> <p>This report updates on Camden’s We Make Camden partnerships approach. It focuses on non-contractual and non-statutory partnerships that we are developing in response to the shared goals set out in We Make Camden and through a Missions approach.</p> <p>A lot of our recent work has been on developing new partnership relationships and networks, with a view to enabling local organisations to find new inspiration and opportunities to contribute towards delivering We Make Camden and the missions, drawing on their wide range of levers, resources and expertise.</p> <p>While we already have a range of longstanding good practice in local partnerships, we currently in the process of adding more rigour and infrastructure, combined with clarity of partnership asks in order to enhance what is already a rich partnership landscape.</p> <p>Our aim is to secure more action and impact from a wide range of partners, by connecting across business, public sector, higher education, voluntary and community sector partners, as well as with citizens and groups leading social action. Through building relationships across these various groups, we are opening up and creating new connections and opportunities that will help us deliver our We Make Camden missions.</p> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b></p> <p>No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Ruth Craven, Partnership Lead, Participation and Partnerships, 5 Pancras Square N1C 4AG <a href="mailto:ruth.craven@camden.gov.uk">ruth.craven@camden.gov.uk</a> 0207 494 4835</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p>That the Committee notes and comments on the approach described in the report.</p>	

Signed:



Date: 1.11.2024

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The report focuses on our We Make Camden corporate partnership strategy and the infrastructure we have been developing to enable us to deliver We Make Camden missions.
- 1.2. The report does not cover partnerships where organisations are commissioned by us to deliver a product or service. Camden has a large number of longstanding and effective statutory partnerships and sector and issue-specific networks, which are also not the focus of this paper.
- 1.3. Camden has several flagship partnership programmes that are successfully engaging large businesses and institutions in local priorities like tackling the Climate Crisis (Camden Climate Alliance) and in creating a wide range of innovative and exciting work and career-related opportunities for Camden residents with local organisations (for example Camden STEAM and Good Work Camden). These are not covered in detail here.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. We have a very strong track record of partnership which has been exemplified and highlighted in the cost of living response, during the pandemic and in our coalition of organisations delivering support for refugees. We also have strong relationships with local universities, including with University College London (UCL) with whom we have shared a memorandum of understanding since 2020. This has translated into a wide range of fruitful academic and strategic collaborations. We also have very strong partnerships with Central St Martins (CSM) and University of the Arts London (UAL) more widely, CSM have been strong partners in deepening networks of collaboration in their local neighbourhood around Euston and through innovative participatory projects in response to borough challenges such as overcrowded housing and loneliness and social isolation as part of the public collaboration lab.
- 2.2. In 2020, a Local Government Association (LGA) peer challenge report highlighted real strengths across Camden, including an innovative and well embedded approach to participation. The peer review team also made some helpful recommendations for what we might continue to build on, including in the partnerships space. This included a focus on 'ensuring that partners (organisations and communities) understand the priorities for delivery and continue to feel connected and involved in the process of delivering Camden 2025'.
- 2.3. Since 2020 a lot has happened. We have faced, and weathered, a pandemic. We are still seeing the profound impact it has had on our communities and our borough, coupled with the more recent challenges posed by cost of living increases. We've seen how, in times of crisis, we are strongest when we work

together; across sector, geography and organisational boundaries. We've seen the benefits that working in a more networked and connected way across Camden can bring.

- 2.4. We have made considerable progress to mobilise a borough wide response to reducing the inequalities we see across Camden and to focus on what matters most to our communities. This includes the reshape of Camden 2025 into We Make Camden (WMC) - a longer-term vision for the borough. As part of this we have a set of ambitious cross-cutting missions which aim to reduce/remove many of the inequalities that we see across Camden, by bringing together the resources of our borough as a whole.

### **3. A boroughwide approach to connect and convene**

- 3.1. Camden Council plays an important leader of place role in convening the borough as well as being operationally involved in networks and partnerships that are delivering the missions. A key part of our approach to deliver WMC is in convening an annual summit which brings together multi-sector partners and citizens leading social action to celebrate, reflect on and push for further action toward the missions. We have delivered three summits to date, each hosted by a local partner organisation (University College London, Wellcome Collection, and University of London Senate House).
- 3.2. In 2022 we worked with residents to co-create the Good Life Camden (GLC) framework, which breaks down the concept of living a good life into the themes residents told us are most important to them. This is helping us to focus our work on those central themes to ensure we are making an impact and progress in each theme. The framework is forming an important part of how we are understanding the State of the Borough, including where we have gaps in data and understanding of key issues that we want to address.
- 3.3. Both the State of the Borough report and the GLC framework were launched at the 2023 WMC Summit, and together they enable organisations to take an evidenced based approach to collectively prioritising action and measuring impact against our local priorities, which we revisit annually.
- 3.4. We have been using the GLC framework to monitor progress and impact towards a wide range of priorities, including working with partners to ensure their social value activities are connecting with our local priorities and issues. For example, British Land, a local developer and landowner, has used the framework to help design how it measures its social impact aligned with local priorities. GLC helped it to create a flexible and collaborative framework which gives it the citizen insight it needs to create long lasting social impact in the redevelopment of the Euston Tower.
- 3.5. The framework has also been used by Origin Tenants Voices, a group of tenants living in housing association properties in Somers Town, to help enrich their own thinking about what is important in their lives as Origin Tenants.

- 3.6. Partners have shared positive feedback on how helpful We Make Camden Summits have been in enabling them to connect and network, and how the missions help give a clear sense of council priorities. Our We Make Camden movement has grown with each summit, and some diverse partnership networks around each mission have begun to mobilise.

**Figure 1 – artwork from the 2023 summit**



- 3.7. We are currently testing out how the partnership aspect of Missions can be strengthened by developing a clearer role and asks for organisations to contribute. Part of this is by onboarding a group of Missions Ambassadors and testing out with them what this role could and should mean in practice to get the most impact. Partners expressed willingness and appetite to be involved in this at the 2024 Summit, and work is underway to explore this further. These organisations include Phoenix Court Works, the British Museum, University College London (UCL), Roundhouse, University of the Arts' Central St Martins (UAL CSM), Arsenal F.C., Camden Giving and Word on the Curb.
- 3.8. While we work with partners to test out the ambassador role and other approaches to partnership, we will be looking at the ways we can evaluate the impact of partner involvement in the missions, e.g. through quantitative measures e.g. numbers of new opportunities delivered and people involved, but also exploring more qualitative impacts, including exploring how we might capture some of the positive journeys and knock-on impacts that new opportunities and connections might have helped to catalyse. Some of the roles we are looking to explore are set out in Figure 2.

**Figure 2 – Ambassador roles and themes we are exploring**

	Recognition of action	Advocate/ champion	Sponsorship	Research, learning & evaluation
<b>Description</b>	Recognising where a potential partner is already doing something positive in relation to We Make Camden and a mission	A partner uses their platforms to promote and advocate for the missions. They are happy to make links and connections through their networks	A partner offers direct sponsorship of a local initiative, organisation or project in relation to We Make Camden & our missions	A partner works closely with us to develop thinking and practice around missions
<b>Ask of a partner</b>	To become part of the We Make Camden story, and allowing us to use their logo on communications related to We Make Camden	To use their existing existing platforms and networks to share mission-related content, stories and opportunities	To provide financial or nonfinancial support (skills, expertise, mentoring) directly to a local organisation (i.e a school, VCS org, community group)	To ask as a critical friend advising us as our work progresses, and where possible providing additional resource, skills and capacity
<b>Value for Camden (council &amp; communities)</b>	Ability to show existing work and strengths relating to each mission  Increased reach through recognition of work already happening	Increased reach across our partner networks  External support and backing	Increased financial and non financial support for local initiatives across the borough	Strengthen our thinking and practice around missions, and access additional skills/ expertise that we may not have already
<b>Value for the partner</b>	To be profiled via Camden's communication channels  Increased reach and connection with new relationships across the borough	Access to borough wide data and insight via Good Life Camden  Access to support in linking up/ forming new relationships across the borough	To better understand local priorities  Alignment with CSR activity  Access to borough wide data and insight via Good Life Camden	To have Camden Council as a 'test bed' for innovative thinking (i.e. mission-oriented practice)  Access to borough wide data and insight via Good Life Camden

- 3.9. While we test and learn around the ambassador offer and ask in the lead up to the next Summit, we already have positive examples of action being taken and supported by partners in the borough that we can build on. For example, as part of our youth mission, Camden Learning, which is formed of Camden schools, and Camden Council's STEAM programme are working to develop an AI Campus for pupils in the borough with Google. The Campus will aim to enable a diverse range of students to deepen their knowledge of AI and supporting subjects, as well as covering such things as the important ethical dimensions of AI and how it should best be used in the future, and the creativity and imagination involved in developing and applying new technologies.
- 3.10. We also have a very strong partnership in place with Camden Giving who are delivering the We Make Camden Kit, which the Council worked alongside Camden Giving to develop and which we continue to provide funding towards. The We Make Camden Kit is a partnership between Camden Giving, Camden Council, Camden citizens, and Camden businesses.
- 3.11. The Kit is a revolutionary approach to funding new ideas, supporting Camden residents who have first-hand experience of the challenges facing the borough and how best to tackle them. It helps them (with small grants, support and infrastructure advice) kick-start community projects that contribute to one or more of the We Make Camden Missions.
- 3.12. Since August 2021 it has funded more than 300 projects led by citizens, all around the borough and contributing to the missions in different ways. As well as council funding, the Kit is increasingly being supported by local business partners. There are a range of stories which highlight the wide range of community action being enabled by the Kit, for example:

Chris	The Curios Club	<a href="https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/curious-club/">https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/curious-club/</a>
Joana	Journey to creating your own garments	<a href="https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/journey-to-making-your-own-garments/">https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/journey-to-making-your-own-garments/</a>
Zia	Highgate Black Womens Wellness	<a href="https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/highgate-black-womens-wellness-group/">https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/highgate-black-womens-wellness-group/</a>
Batuala Alexander	Creators House	<a href="https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/creators-house/">https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/creators-house/</a>
Robbie and friends	Social Notes	<a href="https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/social-notes-music-for-one-and-all/">https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/social-notes-music-for-one-and-all/</a>
Salina	Read and Play	<a href="https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/read-and-play-a-story-of-change/">https://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/read-and-play-a-story-of-change/</a>

3.13. Many more stories about the kit can be explored via the We Make Camden website [www.wemakecamden.org.uk](http://www.wemakecamden.org.uk).

#### 4. Partnership areas for development

4.1. In 2023 we completed some review work to better understand the We Make Camden partnership landscape; as well as some of the opportunities that exist to help us get more out of our partnerships.

This work included:

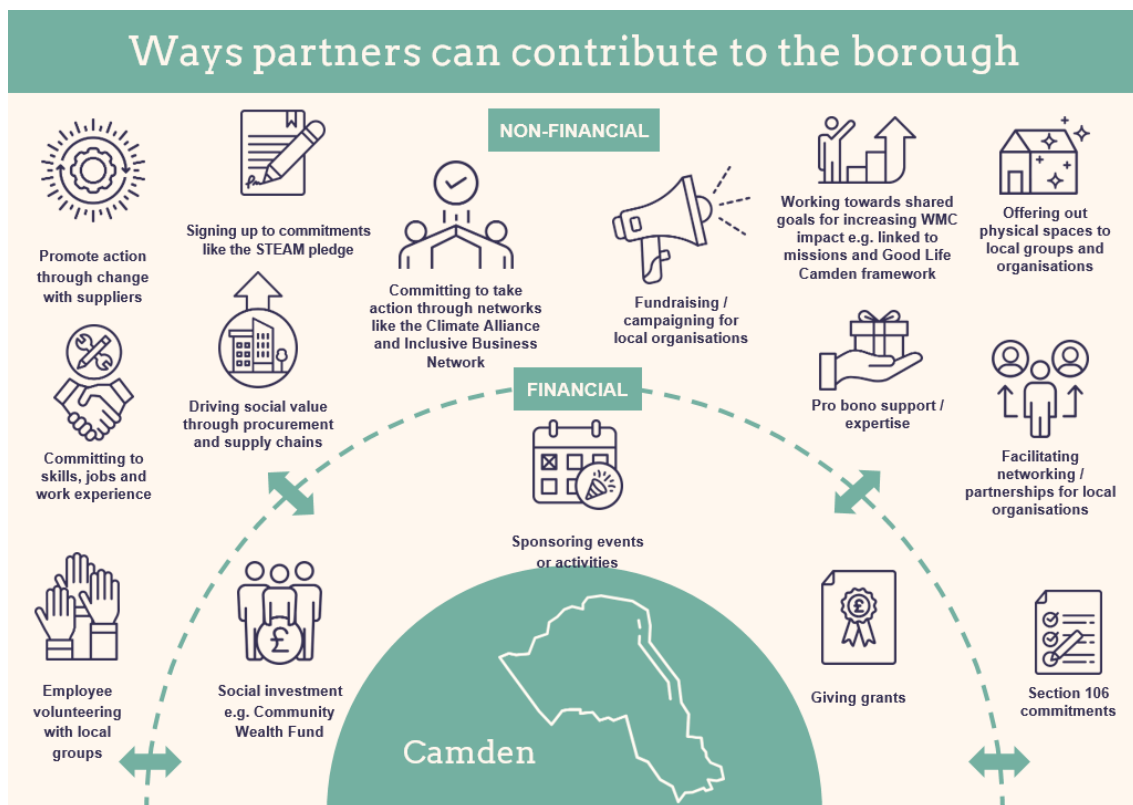
- A review of our current partnership ways of working
- A review to understand some of the challenges in the operational delivery of mission-oriented working
- Market research and other work to support in establishing the Community Wealth Fund (NB: detailed paper about setting up CWF came to RCP Scrutiny in July 2023)

4.2. Coming out of this research, the strength of our statutory and voluntary and community sector (VCS) relationships was highlighted, being strongly held across the organisation, allowing for close collaboration and innovation. Existing good practice and clarity of ask were highlighted in existing programmes like STEAM (Camden Learning), Good Work Camden and the Camden Climate Alliance. The following were identified as areas for development:

- We could exercise more rigour around how we navigate ‘new’ relationships and partnerships with borough wide institutions and corporates and convert relationships and ‘warm conversations’ into action/ impact.

- Partners want us to provide clarity of the ‘ask’ and clear opportunities to be involved. See figure 3 for infographic setting out the various roles that partners can play.
- We could be clearer in the ask around ‘brokerage’ of partnership input, particularly the expectations and support needed for leadership colleagues who are meeting with partners at a senior level.
- To realise our missions, we need to do more to mobilise partner action and leadership and support this to happen at a greater pace.

Figure 3 – ways partners can contribute to the borough



4.3. In response to these findings, we have developed our corporate partnership function, a supporting service that collaborates with different parts of the organisation to help initiate, convert, grow and sustain partnerships with people and organisations across the borough. The team supports our existing distributed leadership we have around partnerships, but also aims to better coordinate different conversations and opportunities across the borough. We are also creating partnership opportunities at neighbourhood and ward level, linking back to citizen and grassroots insight we hold via our locally based teams and partners.

#### Work with Camden Anchors

4.4. In addition to the We Make Camden Summit, since 2023 we have been convening the leadership of some of the largest corporate and knowledge

organisations in Camden for bi-annual anchor roundtables. Through these discussions, we are exploring the different ways these large organisations can contribute as good neighbours in the borough and identifying new opportunities to partner and collaborate. The focus of these conversations has so far included the Community Wealth Fund, maximising apprenticeship and work placement opportunities and tackling health inequalities. As our We Make Camden Mission approach develops, further partner governance is being established to ensure that we can maximise the impact of partner collaborations within the borough and continue to mobilise contributions and action within our Missions.

## **5. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

- 5.1 The Executive Director Corporate Services has been consulted and has no comments to add.

## **6. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor**

- 6.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **7. Environmental Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

**REPORT ENDS**