

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: ALL
REPORT TITLE: Disability Oversight Panel referral to scrutiny	
REPORT OF: Strategy and Change	
FOR SUBMISSION TO: Disability Oversight Panel	DATE: 18 February 2020
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This paper aims to support the Disability Oversight Panel in identifying any issues and areas of exploration that it would like to pass to the Joint Chairs of Scrutiny meeting, so that key issues for residents with a disability can be considered for regular inclusion on the agendas of the Council’s formal Scrutiny Committees.</p> <p>The Disability Oversight Panel is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider key areas of focus to recommend to Scrutiny for further exploration. <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report</p> <p>Contact Officer: Alex Evans Senior Policy and Project Officer Strategy and Change 5th Floor, 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG 020 7974 2794 alex.evans@camden.gov.uk</p>	

1. Introduction

1.1 The Disability Oversight panel is a Councillor led panel. Its purpose is to:

- Champion the needs of residents with a disability and ensure their voices are heard in key areas of council policy.
- Discuss key issues for different groups of disabled residents that the Equality Champion Leads have identified through their individual roles following engagement and networking across Camden during the preceding year.
- Hear directly from service users as to their experiences and any recommendations.
- Hear from appropriate experts.
- To support Councillor Champions to be effective in their role.
- Identify issues and areas of exploration to pass to the Joint Chairs of Scrutiny meeting so that key issues for those groups can be considered for regular inclusion on the agendas of the Council's formal scrutiny committees and for consideration of such issues forming the basis for relevant panel work by the committees.
- Consider further individual liaison with the Chairs of the relevant Scrutiny Committee to ensure that disabled residents are involved in the scrutiny of relevant issues on the agendas to the Council's scrutiny committees.
- Consider whether other recommendations should be made to other parts of the Council, in particular concerning decision-making which impacts disabled residents.
- Review progress and work undertaken during the year.

1.2 As part of this work, the Disability Oversight Panel may wish to submit a referral report to Joint Chairs of Scrutiny, which is due to take place on 11 March 2020. The deadline for final reports to be submitted is 28 February 2020.

2. Issues the Disability Oversight Panel may wish to consider for formal Scrutiny consideration

Employment Support

2.1 In February 2019, the Disability Oversight Panel hosted a public engagement event on the theme of Employment Support. Issues raised during this meeting included the importance of getting out into the community, for the Council to work in partnership with organisations, for employers to understand the needs of employees, and for there to be a better online offer.

2.2 The insight gathered from residents was used to develop the four ideas for improving and building on current employment support:

- Taking a neighbourhood approach to delivering employment support
- Integrating our current employment offer to make sure it is working as effectively as it can together
- Working with and supporting Camden employers to be good, inclusive employers
- Creating a digital platform to make it easier for residents to identify support

Recommendation: Employment support is one of the Council's big investment programmes. In light of this, the Disability Oversight Panel may wish to consider whether it wants to make any recommendations for Scrutiny consideration. The Panel may also wish to consider whether it wishes to recommend further exploration of any issues raised by residents through their own engagement.

Healthy and Active Lives

2.3 In May 2019 the Disability Oversight Panel hosted a public engagement event on the theme Healthy and Active lives, with a particular focus on the new Leisure centre contract. Issues raised during this meeting included staff knowledge and awareness of disabilities, including hidden disabilities, accessibility of facilities, and for staff with disabilities to lead sessions.

2.4 The views and ideas from the event were incorporated into the leisure management contract specification. The contract was awarded to GLL, and the new contract will commence from 1 April 2020. Examples of how GLL will meet the needs of residents with disabilities are as follows:

- Produce annual Easy Read timetables, co-designed alongside a range of community stakeholders who represent Camden's disability community, including Camden Disability Action and The Camden Society.
- Increase the provision of targeted community learn-to-swim lessons. This provision would include a lesson programme catering to under-represented groups including disability-swimming lessons. GLL would ensure that all teachers working on specialised and targeted lessons are provided with appropriate additional training, including sign language training.
- A minimum of 25% of apprenticeship places shall be ring-fenced for Camden citizens with physical, sensory and learning disabilities.
- A Disability Customer Service Video has been created. This video helps identify the most appropriate customer journey for a disabled user and informs them of all services, facilities and equipment available in the leisure centre. The video will also be used to educate customers on how best to use disabled equipment for safe and effective use.

Recommendation: the Disability Oversight Panel may wish to consider whether they are satisfied that key areas of resident feedback gathered on the topic have been adequately reflected in the key areas of resident insight. The Panel may also wish to consider whether it wishes to recommend further exploration of any issues raised by residents through their own engagement.

Children should be given the best start in life

2.5 In July 2019 the Disability Oversight Panel hosted a public engagement event on the theme of "Growing up in Camden as a disabled child". Issues raised during this meeting included the provision of information about short breaks, how the Local Offer is publicised, and how the Council works in partnership with the voluntary sector.

- 2.6 The views and ideas from this event will be used to inform how the Short Breaks services are recommissioned how the Local Offer website will be redesigned. Insight from the event will also be used when the next Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy is developed later this year.

Recommendation: the Disability Oversight Panel may wish to consider whether they are satisfied that key areas of resident feedback gathered on the topic have been adequately reflected in the key areas of resident insight. The Panel may also wish to consider whether it wishes to recommend further exploration of any issues raised by residents through their own engagement.

Redesigning services to make sure residents are at the heart of everything that we do

- 2.7 In September 2019 the Disability Oversight Panel hosted a public event on the theme of “Disabled residents’ experience when contacting Camden Council. Issues raised during this meeting included automated telephone systems, how the council communicates with residents, the reception area at 5 Pancras Square and technological barriers.
- 2.8 Colleagues from the services areas have met to discuss all of the feedback and suggestions from each of the tables to understand what residents’ views are. There was a lot of feedback and suggestions so this has taken some time.
- 2.9 Much of the feedback relates to things which are within the remit of individual services who attended the event, but others relate to other services, such as Housing Repairs Contact Centre, Facilities Management and IT. We have started talking to some of these services to understand what improvements we can make together so that we are working in a joined up way and not duplicating efforts or making changes that will benefit and meet the needs of one group but negatively impact on another’s.
- 2.10 Examples of changes that have already been implemented by Camden Learning Disability Service are the new First Contact model for telephone calls and the “Meet and Greet” service. The former has led to more issues being resolved at point of contact which means longer phone calls and on occasion longer waits to have calls picked up. An options appraisal for call waiting/holding systems has been completed and a decision on preferred option is pending, following feedback from co-production steering group. The ‘Meet and Greet’ service is now available three days a week to meet service users on arrival at 5 Pancras Square and escort them to their appointments to improve visitor experience.
- 2.11 A new language service will go live on 1 April 2020, which includes communication support for d/Deaf and hard of hearing residents. In line with the feedback from the public event, there will be a new video British Sign Language service, which will be delivered in partnership with Deaf Direct, who are a d/Deaf Charity.

Recommendation: the Disability Oversight Panel may wish to consider whether they are satisfied that key areas of resident feedback gathered on the topic have been adequately reflected in the key areas of resident insight. The Panel may also wish to consider whether it wishes to recommend further exploration of any issues raised by residents through their own engagement.

Other themes

2.12 Members of the Disability Oversight Panel have received updates from the Council on a number of areas, and have also raised a number of other issues on behalf of disabled residents during the year:

- Employment support
- Leisure Centre contract
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) strategy
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)/Disability intersectionality
- Camden learning Disability Services (CLDS) project
- Update on Camden's Accessibility Strategy
- Camden Town Hall refurbishment - Design for Accessibility
- Liberty Protection Safeguards
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020/2021
- Deaf interpreting project
- Dockless bicycles
- Customer Contact
- Mental Health

Recommendation: that the Disability Oversight Panel consider whether they would like to refer any of the above areas to Scrutiny for further exploration.

REPORT ENDS