

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Community and Children's Services Committee	08/02/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Social Wellbeing Strategy	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Claire Giraud, Strategy Officer, Department of Community and Children's Services	

### Summary

The City of London Corporation (COLC) published a Social Wellbeing Strategy in 2017, aimed at reducing loneliness and building communities. The strategy set out different approaches to tackling loneliness and social isolation in the Square Mile. This report and the attached Social Wellbeing Action Plan 2017–20 (Appendix 2) provide an update on the implementation of the strategy to date. The majority of actions are now in progress or completed.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note and consider progress in implementing the Social Wellbeing Strategy.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The COLC's Adult Wellbeing Principles include a commitment that people are not socially isolated and that they have the relationships and support they need. The Social Wellbeing Strategy (see Appendix 1) was developed to support the delivery of this commitment.
2. Reducing social isolation is identified as a priority in the Department of Community and Children's Services' Business Plan, in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and in our Mental Health Strategy.
3. Tackling social isolation is also recognised as important for our safeguarding responsibilities, as isolation can increase vulnerability to abuse. For example, this link is recognised in the City and Hackney Safeguarding Board's Strategic Plan 2017–18, which includes an action to:

“Develop a local ‘Early Help’ protocol and overview of services to support socially isolated individuals who lack support and may be at risk of safeguarding concerns.”

4. The Social Wellbeing Action Plan 2017–20 (see Appendix 2) was developed to support implementation of the strategy and to monitor progress on delivery. Progress is routinely monitored by the Adult Social Care leadership team and reported to the Adult Wellbeing Partnership.

### Action Plan Summary

5. Overall, 30 actions have commenced since the launch of the strategy, of which 14 are completed, 15 are in progress, and one is experiencing minor problems (we were not able to place a community noticeboard in the Barbican Waitrose store and are currently investigating alternative locations).

### RAG Status Key and Summary

Status of Actions		Compared to Feb 2018
Not started	5	-3
Major Problems	0	0
Minor Problems	1	-1
In Progress	15	-9
Completed	14	+11

6. Significant milestones include:
  - development of the Community Builders initiative, with completion of a successful pilot on the Golden Lane Estate. Work is now underway to roll this out to other City Corporation estates
  - the success of inclusion groups – for example, the Mansell Street Women’s Group, facilitated by Age Concern for older Bangladeshi women, and ‘Out and About at the Barbican’ for older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) residents
  - a City guide listing details of community groups and social activities, which has been made available in venues across the City of London.
  
7. The five actions not progressed as originally envisaged are:
  - *To seek access to community resources within the City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI):* the refurbishment of the Golden Lane Community Centre has improved and increased community provision. However, the department will engage with COLPAI when the development is more progressed in order to explore opportunities for community access to facilities.
  - *To commission a peri-natal support project:* needs analysis does not support the commissioning of a City specific approach. Services for parents of new born children – including those who may be isolated – will be progressed within the children, young people and maternity work stream of the City and

Hackney Integration Programme. The department's Children's Centre Review will also consider the needs of this group as part of its scope, and report to proposals to this Committee in June 2019.

- *To develop outreach by social wellbeing services in places where potentially isolated residents already go.* An outreach delivery model is not considered cost effective. However, the mobilisation of new contracts to support isolated and vulnerable groups in April 2019, will include a greater emphasis on service promotion, including a communications plan to support access to and awareness of services and activities in the City.
  - *To improve use of online technologies such as Meetup.com and interests.me to link people to each other, groups and activities:* The use of online and digital technologies is being supported through digital inclusion initiatives. However, the department's focus will be on better signposting to community activities, including the provision of a dedicated web portal as part of a contracted service from April 2019.
  - *To train officers and partners to identify signs of relationship distress, offer support and make referrals, with ongoing conversations with providers to identify an appropriate training offer.* This training has not been developed. However, the City has committed to roll out a 'Making Every Contact Count' approach, which seeks to use every interaction to achieve health and wellbeing. This provides an opportunity to address this action, and that will be explored when the roll out of the project is scoped.
8. A brief summary of key developments under each of the four themes identified in the Social Wellbeing Strategy is provided below. These themes are: Asset-Based Community Development; Shared Spaces; Early Intervention; and Building Skills.

***Theme One: Asset-Based Community Development***

9. This theme aims to encourage community-based responses to loneliness, drawing on and enhancing the assets, strengths and skills already present within the City of London community.
10. A key initiative is Community Builders, residents on City estates who volunteer to connect people and link them to groups or activities. Following a pilot on the Golden Lane Estate, Phase 2 is underway on other City estates. A sustainable model of delivery that adapts to the different local contexts but keeps the ethos of Community Builders is being developed.
11. Residents' groups have been supported to hold events on their estates. For example, 'Remembering Yesterday, Celebrating Today' provided the theme for Avondale Community Events Big Picnic on 1 September 2018, bringing residents together to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War 1.
12. Aldgate Community Events was a key partner in the delivery of the Aldgate Square Festival from 15 to 17 June 2018, which celebrated the launch of the Square. The festival included a spectrum of music, arts, performance, games and theatre from around the East End and beyond, reflecting the rich and diverse

culture of the community. An outreach programme involved the community, and included an initial consultation through to a call for local performers to participate in the festival.

### ***Theme Two: Shared Spaces***

13. The actions in this theme aim to create and enhance shared spaces where people naturally come together, either through chance encounters or organised community activities.
14. This Committee received an update on the work of the Dragon Café on 21 September 2018. The Dragon Café seeks to engage City residents and workers with their mental wellbeing through a varied fortnightly programme of activities in a welcoming space in the Shoe Lane Library. An evaluation of the Dragon Café in the City Pilot found that three-quarters of visitors (76%) agreed or strongly agreed that attending helped to improve their mental wellbeing.
15. The development of shared physical spaces that help to connect communities includes the launch of Aldgate Square in June 2018 and the refurbishment of Golden Lane Community Centre, which was completed in July 2018.

### ***Theme Three: Early Intervention***

16. This theme looks at how contact can be made with lonely people sooner, through sustained and consistent communication and by outreach work using a wider network of partners.
17. One focus area is support for 'social prescribing', enabling GPs, nurses and other primary care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services (such as community groups) for support. One action has been to develop a guide to community resources in the City of London to support NHS social prescribers.
18. Providing up-to-date information on activities and resources is vital for community development. The *Over 50s City Guide* provides listings for groups in and around the City of London, and was launched and distributed in March 2018. The COLC's online Family and Young People's Information (FYI) Directory provides details of services, activities and events for families and young people in the City of London, and this continues to be regularly updated.
19. Those who care for a family member (including young carers) can find themselves losing contact with their communities and networks. A new carers assessment has been developed and includes assessment of the carer's social and community needs.

### ***Theme Four: Building Skills***

20. The actions in this theme aim to develop the skills that will enable individuals to form new connections and enhance existing relationships – for example, providing an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Conversation Class for residents who do not have English as a first language, and commissioning the Age UK 'Only Connect' programme, launched on 1 October 2018 to improve inclusion and digital skills for older people.

## **Conclusion**

21. The plan has moved forward since its creation and many of the actions are either complete or in progress.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Social Wellbeing Strategy
- Appendix 2 – Social Wellbeing Action Plan for 2017–20

The Strategy was approved by this Committee on 11 May 2017 and by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 16 June 2017.

## **Background Papers**

- Social Wellbeing Strategy – Report to the Community and Children’s Services Committee, 11 May 2017.
- Dragon Café in the City – Report to the Community and Children’s Services Committee, 14 September 2018.

## **Claire Giraud**

Strategy Officer – Department of Community and Children’s Services

T: 020 7332 1503

E: [claire.giraud@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:claire.giraud@cityoflondon.gov.uk)