

DCCS Covid-19 response - Comments from limited survey 1 - 19 October 2020

Comments
<p>My general feeling is that the department has done very well. Education has been active throughout the pandemic and as far as I am aware - given all the obvious ongoing problems - institutions and providers have been very impressed with the level of support and advice from officers. It has been a huge operation to react to constantly changing government guidelines and there are bound to be pockets where things have not gone well. Delays to construction work - particularly at one school site - has caused unrest but then so did the start up of work for an entirely different set of reasons. I appreciate that some members representing residential wards have specific issues but in my ward there is praise for the way the City has communicated and they are very philosophical about the change to a 'new normal'. Problems have arisen with things like rubbish collection, our persistent rough sleeper who declined the offer of accommodation and so has become accustomed to having the streets to himself (he is really quite a problem for residents) and for</p>
<p>From a personal point of view I can report that the CCS team were quick off the mark by contacting elderly and ill residents to check on their well being on Monday morning. Wearing my CC hat I asked and was given assurance that residents who wished to give information of their needs particularly over this time were being visited. For further information I was visited yesterday by a nurse from the Newman Practice and given the</p>
<p>Thank you (and the Chairman) so much For this request for feedback. I don't feel really able to comment (not being a resident and generally having been absent from the City since March). My Barbican engagement though suggests generally a positive view (if I am not conflicted in commenting) - particularly Michael and the Estate team. I am sure whoever that the Director and team ensured a smooth service more widely. Very</p>
<p>I am not aware of any action taken by the Community and Children's Services Department in response to the Covid-19 crisis. I did receive an undated letter from the Lord Mayor and the Chair of Policy and Resources outlining online and telephone support available from the City of London. We have received considerable help and support from our local Waitrose. The new City Food Bank has been in regular contact and has been providing food for those residents who requested help. The government food parcels have been delivered for those residents who have been required to shield. We have had regular visits from the City police. Age UK</p>
<p>has kept in touch and offered support including organising regular phone calls for those who feel, or are, I am part of a household which was required to shield. My personal experience and that of the many other ward residents with whom I was in touch was of extremely encouraging mutual help. I'm aware that my ward has no social housing and probably very few people with material poverty and, therefore, is not comparable with some other wards. My impression is that most residents who are working have been working from home. I haven't had anyone request information about what they might obtain from the city, but have continued to deal with queries about pavement licences and failure to receive notifications of</p>
<p>Excellent, thank you</p>
<p>I believe the City Corporation's response to the Covid 19 has been good and it is clear to me that officers in the Community and Children's Services team have been trying hard to respond in a caring and supportive way to all of the various groups they serve. The briefings from the various Departments at the beginning of each Community and Children's Services Committee meeting have been clear and informative and from my</p>

The people organising the support groups around the Barbican and the food bank will reply for themselves, but from my point of view as chair of the Barbican Association, I quote what I wrote in the BA Newsletter in April: "At [the CCSC meeting on Youtube] officers gave updates on what they were doing to manage the coronavirus crisis. They described a range of practical actions they were taking to identify and support vulnerable residents, adults and children; rough sleepers; victims of domestic abuse; school children; and residents in general, and how they were working with care providers and volunteer groups and others. I was impressed: the NHS isn't the only public service doing its best at this time. The City might have been a bit slow with its communications to residents at the outset, but it has clearly been putting practical help in place. And I'd specifically like to mention the BEO here, who despite having a lot of staff unable to work, moved swiftly to maintain some level of service and support vulnerable residents, and have continued to adapt their plans. That doesn't happen without planning and hard work. We should thank them. "

Negatives: I think the City in general was bit sluggish to get moving and say what it was doing at the outset. I am assuming that it did all the things it said it was doing (i haven't heard either way). It could have communicated better. It could also have played a stronger role in communicating supportive activities that

See appendix 1

See appendix 2

See appendix 3

See appendix 4

See appendix 5

On behalf of MSERA - Middlesex Street Estate Residents Association Committee

1. MSE (Middlesex Street Estate) Estate Office was closed during lockdown but has remained so, despite the Artizan Street Library reopening. Residents have been told that the Office is small and has difficulty being covid-compliant, and it has also been suggested that all CoL offices should re-open at the same time, not when each is ready. This is very frustrating for residents as we have been denied services, there has been a lack of contact and presence of CoL Officers on the Estate. No consideration has been given to temporary or alternative arrangements that might have improved contact points and addressed ongoing issues on the Estate.

2. The CoL did not proactively respond to the challenges presented by lockdown and instead residents and councillors were left to fill the gap, i.e. by starting covid support networks, food bank distributions etc. Residents saw their living conditions deteriorate on the MSE due to multiple factors, often linked to City projects or the disruption of services. Our views and needs were neglected, and residents on the MSE felt obliged to re-form a Residents Association in order to have a greater voice and seek proactive dialogue on various topics.

3. Where residents did take the initiative, the City was often obstructive and not helpful. For example: i) City tried to shut down the mask making project, and wrote threatening letters and used councilmen to pressure people involved to stop making free masks. ii) City shut down the free distribution of sanitizer sachets in the lifts after 6 weeks of successful operation. iii) City obstructed use of the Portsoken Community Centre "Green Box" facility on Mansell Street for food distribution, and changed the locks. Resolution of this took weeks.

4. Implementation of traffic measures and road closures was imposed with little consultation and thought about how they would affect residents. New signage and traffic flows remains confusing and disruptive to

1. As an elected Member for Cripplegate Ward I have had no communication from CCSC as far as I can remember.

2. It would have been useful to have had relevant information to pass on to my electorate, particularly those residents living in Golden Lane Estate. As a Barbican resident, I have had no communication from CCSC.

3. The initial advice from Barbican Estate Office was that COVID issues were a matter for each house group to deal with. However they subsequently helped in providing a coordinating role which I think was

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