

Housing and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

Wednesday 14 October 2020
6.00 pm

Online/Virtual. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting.
Please contact FitzroyAntonio.williams@southwark.gov.uk for a link to the meeting.

Supplemental Agenda No. 1

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| 5. | SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ESTATE CLEANING To receive a brief report on Estate Cleaning. | 1 - 30 |
| 8. | SCRUTINY REVIEW OF COMMUNITY HUBS To receive the report in connection with community hubs from the Cabinet Member for Social Support and Homelessness due to be considered by cabinet on 20 October 2020. | 31 - 100 |

Contact

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Webpage: www.southwark.gov.uk

Date: 9 October 2020

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Item No. 5. | Classification: Open | Date: 14 October 2020 | Meeting Name: Housing and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission |
| Report title: | | Scrutiny Review of Estate Cleaning | |
| Ward(s) or groups affected: | | All | |
| From: | | Director of Environment | |

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the housing and community engagement commission note the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

2. The Integrated Cleaning Contract (ICC) was created in 2003 to replace a mix of previously let cleaning contracts in Southwark with both in-house and external service providers. Southwark Cleaning was formed at the same time with the objective of being the Council's in-house, single point of delivery for all the aspects of the ICC.
3. Staff who previously worked for external contractors were transferred over to the Southwark Cleaning workforce under TUPE regulations and then transferred onto council employment contracts, resulting in enhanced terms and conditions for most of the transferred staff.
4. The ICC's main focus is the delivery of the following core services:
 - Street Cleaning
 - Estate Cleaning
 - Highways and estates ground maintenance
5. The ICC Business Unit is part of the Waste & Cleaning Division which is part of the Environment & Leisure Directorate.

Service Level Agreement

6. The Housing and Modernisation Department (H&M) is the client department for the estate cleaning and estates grounds maintenance elements of the ICC, a Service Level Agreement (SLA) is in place that sets out H&M's expectations for the delivery of these aspects of the ICC and covers the following:
 - Service Standards and Frequencies
 - Liaison, Communication and Monitoring
 - Performance Measures
 - Service Review
 - Budget
 - Dispute Resolution

7. The 2019/20 charges for the services provided by ICC were as follows:
- Estate Cleaning - £12,959,37.00
 - Estates Grounds Maintenance - £2,316,244.00
8. The SLA is reviewed on an annual basis and a copy of the 2020/21 version is attached as Appendix A to this report.

Services

9. The estate cleaning element of the ICC covers a range of activities that are designed to ensure that the Council's housing stock is maintained in a safe, clean and tidy condition, these activities are as follows:

External Cleaning

- Litter picking including the removal of dog waste
- Litter and dog waste bin emptying
- Manual and mechanical sweeping
- Fly tip/bulky waste removal
- Graffiti and fly poster removal
- Cleaning of bin chambers, refuse and recycling sites.
- Rotation of chute fed waste bins
- Control of weeds in hard surfaces
- Winter maintenance

Internal Cleaning

- Litter picking, sweeping and mopping of communal areas (lifts, lobbies, staircases etc)
 - Cleaning of internal fixtures and fixings, block entry doors and screens
 - Wall and ceiling washing
 - Window cleaning
 - Cleaning of internal refuse rooms
 - Clearance of blocked refuse chutes
 - Fly tip/bulky waste removal
 - Graffiti and fly poster removal
10. The estate cleaning service also provides an all year round, out of hours (6pm to 6am) emergency call out service for estates based emergency cleaning issues e.g. flooding, road traffic accidents, collection and disposal of any matter which requires urgent attention.
11. The core hours of operation for estate cleaning are as follows:
- 08:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday
 - 08:00 to 14:00 Saturday
 - 09:00 to 12:00 or 08:00 to 11:00 Sunday (essential service only)

12. The estate cleaning service is also able to provide additional ad hoc services to the H & M department that fall outside of the SLA, typical examples of these ad hoc works would be as follows:
- Void clearances
 - Clinical cleans of resident's homes
 - Garage clearances
 - Leaflet deliveries

Resources

13. The borough wide estate cleaning service is divided into 4 distinct operational areas:
- South (Dulwich, Nunhead and Peckham Rye)
 - Central (Peckham and Camberwell)
 - North East (Bermondsey and Rotherhithe)
 - North West (Walworth and Borough/Bankside)
14. Estate cleaning staff numbers and designation of staff for each operational area are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Estate Cleaning Staff Numbers and Designations, 2020/21

| Job Type | South | Central | North East | North West | Total |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Area manager | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Supervisor | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 14 |
| Team Leader | 4 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 29 |
| Cleaner | 50 | 87 | 84 | 98 | 319 |
| Driver | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| Loader | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | |
| Graffiti Operative | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 |
| Chute Clearance Operative | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4* | 4 |
| SHU cleaner | 1.5 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 5.5 |
| Total | 64.5 | 109 | 102 | 123 | 398.5 |

* Deployed as required across all 4 operational areas.

15. The estate cleaning service provides training and staff development opportunities to all its workforce to not only enable them to carry out their duties more effectively but to also equip them with the skills to develop their careers within the service and the wider council.
16. Most front line cleaning staff do not have LBS email accounts nor are they issued with work smart phones therefore corporate, departmental and service specific information is cascaded down to the work force via monthly staff briefings that take place between supervisors and their teams often followed up with written material such as posters, minutes, hand-outs etc.

17. In addition to its large work force the estate cleaning service also has a significant fleet requirement to deliver the service. Details of the number and type of vehicles used by ICC for estate cleaning are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2 – Number and type of vehicles used for estate cleaning services

| Vehicle Type/Quantity | South | Central | North East | North West | Total |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 7.5 Tonne Caged Tippers | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 5.5 Tonne Caged Tippers | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 3.5 Tonne Caged Tippers | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 |
| Graffiti Vehicles | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Mechanical Brooms | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Small Vans | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 14 |
| Total | 7 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 30 |

Accommodation

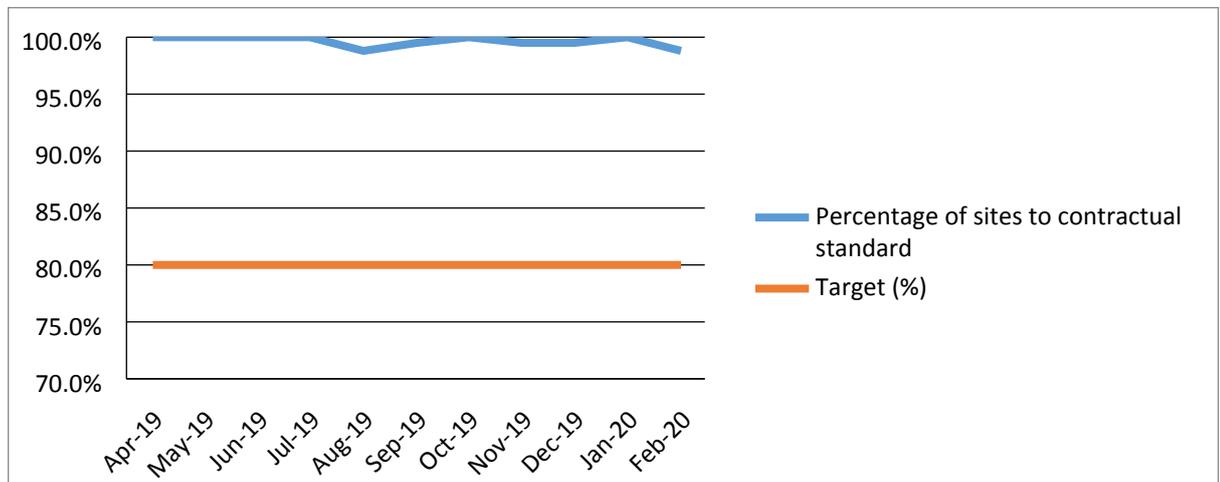
18. The vast majority of estate cleaning staff report to and work from a number of estate mess rooms spread across the borough's housing stock, details of the numbers and location of these mess rooms are attached as Appendix B. Each mess room provides the cleaners with welfare facilities, a space for equipment and materials storage as well as somewhere for local staff briefings and 121 meetings. Each mess room not only serves the cleaners on the host estate but also those working on smaller estates in the vicinity that do not have their own mess rooms.
19. Mobile estate cleaning staff such as graffiti operatives and bulky waste collection crews are based at the ICC depot in Sandgate Street, SE15. The depot also provides storage for the estate cleaning service vehicles, plant and equipment.

Performance Monitoring

20. The service level agreement sets out the structure for the monitoring of the performance of the estate cleaning service and for ease of reference this is summarised as follows:
- Resident Services Officers monitor estate cleanliness when on site and during monthly estate inspections, any cleaning concerns are raised with cleaning supervisors with immediate effect for resolution.
 - Cleaning supervisors monitor estate cleanliness when on site with more formal monitoring taking place on a fortnightly basis as well as participation in monthly estate inspections.
 - Resident Services Officers carry out a formal monitoring process on a monthly basis jointly with tenant representatives, estate cleaning supervisors and communal repairs officers where applicable during estate inspections.

- Quarterly Client/Contractor monitoring meetings are held between the Service manager and the nominated ICC portfolio holder.
 - The Service manager and cleaning portfolio holder carry out random inspections when required, focussing on any areas that have raised concerns in the recent past
21. In addition to the above the cleaning service collate monthly performance stats pertaining to the cleaning service which are submitted to the Director of Resident Services, ICC portfolio holder and the Head of My Southwark Home Owners on a quarterly basis. The performance stats included in this report are as follows:
- Monthly inspection scores for estate cleanliness
 - Number and value of ad hoc works completed
 - Details of any accidents at work to cleaning staff
 - The number of estate cleaning related service requests raised by the public/residents
 - Details of formal complaints raised
 - Details of compliments received
22. The target for estate cleanliness is for 80% of estate inspections to be at an acceptable level of cleanliness. Graph 1 below provides performance information for estate cleanliness for 2019/20. Note that for March 2020 there were no estate inspections carried out due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Graph 1 – Estate cleanliness inspections scores – 2019/20



The Impact of COVID-19 on the estate cleaning service

23. Following the government's announcement of a nationwide lockdown on 23rd March 2020 in response to the coronavirus pandemic Southwark Cleaning management were asked to determine which of the services it provided were essential and which were not, the proposals put forward were accepted by the council and plans put in place to implement the necessary changes.
24. The impact on the estate cleaning service was that most of the activities set out at paragraphs 9 to 12 of this report had to cease or be scaled back as they were not deemed to be essential however a range of core cleaning activities were

retained which it was felt necessary to ensure basic cleanliness standards on estates as well as addressing any safety concerns particularly relating to fire safety. The cleaning activities that remained in place throughout the lockdown period are listed below:

- Enhanced cleaning of internal fixtures and fixings, block entry doors and screens, lift buttons, door handles etc.
 - Sweeping and mopping of communal areas but on a reduced frequency
 - Fly tip/bulky waste removal
 - Litter picking but on a reduced frequency
 - Unblocking of refuse chutes
 - Rotation of chute fed waste bins
 - Removal of offensive graffiti only
25. With reduced service outputs there was not the requirement to have the full establishment of estate cleaning staff on duty, there were also considerations to be made as to how staff could effectively carry out social distancing in the work place and estate mess rooms therefore only 50% of the estate cleaning staff were asked to work at a time on a week on/week off rota basis.
26. Following a relaxation of the lockdown in late May the cleaning service started to plan for a full renewal of services, work took place in all the estate mess rooms to ensure that they complied with social distancing and hygiene guidelines, staff were briefed on their service specific C-19 risk assessments whilst also receiving their own individual risk assessment and following a number of site inspections with the Trades Unions and H&S management more cleaning staff returned to full time work which meant that more cleaning activities could be resumed throughout June with a full resumption of services being possible in early July 2020.

Current Issues

27. Aside from the on-going impact of COVID-19 there are a number of other issues affecting the operational effectiveness of the estate cleaning service which it is actively collaborating with other areas of the council and other agencies to try and resolve. Table 3 below provides details about the nature and impact of these issues along with actions being taken to address them.

Table 3 – Issues on estates affecting operational effectiveness

| Issue | Impact | Actions |
|---|--|--|
| High levels of fly-tipping on housing estates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire risk • Reduced standards of cleanliness • Reduced resident satisfaction • Strain of current cleaning resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly tip tasking group - targeted action of hot spots on estates • Cleaners provide intel to, and work with, enforcement/housing officers to identify persistent offenders • On-going review of cleaning service resources • Performance targets for clearing fly tip within |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | agreed timescales |
| Rough sleepers/anti-social behaviour/drug taking in communal areas of housing estates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire and clinical waste risks • Verbal and physical assaults on cleaning staff • Reduced standards of cleanliness • Reduced resident satisfaction • Strain of current cleaning resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning service work closely with RSO's/RSM's/SASBU/Me t Police, Homeless Persons Unit to identify hot spots/persistent offenders • Risk assessments and work box talks in place for personal safety in work. • Cleaning teams assigned to hot spots to avoid lone working. |

Additional Services

28. On the 1st July 2020 the cleaning service took on the responsibility for the Highways gully cleaning contract, with the new service now firmly bedded in there is scope to offer a gully cleaning service to H&M for housing estate gullies.

Service Review

29. In recent years the council has made changes to street cleaning services to deliver efficiency savings. The efficiency savings have been made with relatively low impact on the cleanliness standards achieved for streets. There is scope for taking the learning and experience from street cleansing efficiency savings and engaging with H&M to determine whether similar efficiency savings could be made on estates.

APPENDICES

| No. | Title |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Appendix A | Service Level Agreement 2020/21 |
| Appendix B | Estate mess room locations |

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

| Background Papers | Held At | Contact |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| None | | |
| | | |

AUDIT TRAIL

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|
| Lead Member | Cllr Catherine Rose, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Environment and Roads | |
| Lead Officer | Michael McNicholas, Head of Waste and Cleaning | |
| Report Author | Nick Mellish, Cleaning Service Manager | |
| Version | Final | |
| Dated | 8 October 2020 | |
| Key Decision? | No | |
| CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER | | |
| Officer Title | Comments Sought | Comments Included |
| Director of Law and Democracy | No | No |
| Strategic Director of Finance and Governance | No | No |
| Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team | | 8 October 2020 |



APPENDIX A

PARTNERSHIP AND SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

**Southwark's Integrated Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Service (ICC) and
HOUSING DEPARTMENT
(Area Management)**

**Covering the period
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021**

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Author: | Robertson Egueye Nick Mellish |
| Version no: | 0.5 |
| Date: | 25/08/2020 |
| Status | Draft version |
| Document Owner: | Robertson Egueye Nick Mellish |
| Copy No: | 1 |
| File Name: | ICC & Area Management Service Level Agreement (SLA) |
| Doc Ref: | SLA3 |

Introduction:

This document outlines a formal agreement for the areas of service to be provided by Southwark's Integrated Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Service, to Area Housing, Resident Services team.

This document gives specific details in relation to service delivery and defines the responsibilities of both the provider (ICC) and the client (Area Housing - Resident Services).

This service level agreement covers the services provided by ICC and is subject to a minimum notice of one month if reduction or variations of service is required by either party. Any significant reductions or changes of the service, requires consultation of both parties and agreement between their respective Strategic Directors. When considering whether to re-tender the service, a process of consultation involving both parties should be undertaken at least 3 months prior to any decision (to re-tender) being made. Budget and service provision will be reviewed on an annual basis.

This service level agreement covers the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Service:

The provision of an integrated estate cleaning and grounds maintenance service (referred to as the Service in this document) to Resident Services.

The core hours of operation will be as follows excluding Christmas Day when there is no service:

- 08:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday
- 08:00 to 14:00 Saturday
- 09:00 to 12:00 or 08:00 to 11:00 Sunday

The Service shall not undertake any work involving mechanical equipment on housing estates and other residential areas before 08.00 and after 20.00 hours. All reasonable means will be used to avoid inconveniencing local residents.

ICC staff will wear appropriate, high visibility work clothing that readily identifies them as the Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Service. Staff will be courteous, helpful and be bound by the Southwark Council Code of Conduct.

Emergency contact details will be notified by the Service Manager to the Resident Services and updated as necessary.

Undertake joint inspections with Resident Services Officers across the Borough on a monthly basis, which may include tenant/leaseholder representatives.

The local cleaning manager will attend each area housing office monthly cleaning meetings to discuss cleaning and grounds maintenance performance issues with relevant Resident Services Managers or their representatives.

A summary of the service specification is attached at Appendix 1.

Service Standards:

Particular attention is drawn to the performance management section of this specification. This will ensure that performance is of the highest standard and has sought to ensure that this is the case by determining service standards as outlined in Appendix 1. The expectation is that particular attention is paid to the supervision requirements of this specification in order to ensure that standards are met and maintained throughout the period of the contract.

The service standards and performance measures within this SLA are congruent with the relevant sections of the Southwark Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments, especially the *Clean and Clear* aspect.

Service standards and response times are shown in **Appendix 1**. All reasonable means will be used to avoid inconveniencing local residents.

Form of Instructions:

The schedule of works and performance standards will be agreed every year, and is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Reactive calls and service requests will normally be received through the Council's Customer Service Centre or the Area teams. They will be logged, with the ICC team progressed, monitored, delivered and closed down in accordance with the original request.

Liaison, Communication and Joint Monitoring:

Liaison and communication will take place in a variety of ways:

- Resident Services Officers will monitor the cleaning of estates when on the estates and during monthly estate inspections. .
- Cleaning supervisors will check general cleaning standards daily and undertake formal monitoring on a fortnightly basis.
- Resident Services Officers will carry out a formal monitoring process on a monthly basis jointly with tenant representatives and communal repairs officers where applicable during estate inspections..
- Area cleaning meetings will take place, when required, involving area management officers, T&RA reps and the local cleaning supervisor to review performance and discuss any issues with the service.

- Quarterly Client/Contractor monitoring meetings will take place between the Service manager and the nominated ICC portfolio holder or their representatives to review performance and discuss any issues with the service.
- The Service manager and cleaning portfolio holder will carry out random inspections when required, focussing on any areas that have raised concerns in the recent past.
- A random inspection will be carried out by an officer with a feedback provided.

Performance against the contract

In the situation where an officer assess that the performance of ICC does not meet the expected service delivery standards, the officer will report this in the first instance to the local cleaning supervisor (via) email who will investigate the matter and feedback.

A rectification notice will be served which will provide ICC with an opportunity to rectify under performance within the agreed timescales. Where under performance is not rectified a default notice will be served and action will be taken in accordance with the Rectification and Default Process in

Appendix 4.

ICC are required to report on the number of rectification and default notices issued and the number resolved within the required timescales at SLA review meetings.

Submission of Reports:

The Service plays a major part in Housing's business objectives and communications campaigns. The expectation is that the Service will contribute ideas, statistics, stories and progress updates in support of Housing's objectives and campaigns.

Performance Measures:

Performance will be measured through the:

- Monthly Estate Inspections
- Quarterly Service Manager and ICC portfolio holder review meetings
- Ad hoc inspections
- Number of complaints, type of complaints and response times
- Performance information as detailed in Appendix 3
- Number of rectification and default notices and numbers responded to within target timescales.
- Response to service requests
- Health and safety, staffing issues.
- Quarterly performance report

Performance reports will be agreed and developed to reflect the needs of both parties; these will be reviewed annually to ensure they reflect any changing business or service needs. ICC will develop systems to collate and provide performance information on mutually agreed dates. Current performance indicators outlined in **Appendix 3**.

Variation of Services:

Mutually agreed variations or other changes to this agreement may be made in writing between the parties' respective authorised officers, at least one month before the date on which the variation or change is to come into effect.

Variation of Charges:

Variations or changes to the Service will be costed as required, and shown as a variation on the quarterly invoice, this could be by way of an increase or reduction.

Where variations are agreed as a temporary arrangement this will remain within the overall budget, there will be no variation of charges. Such temporary arrangements will be formally recorded as part of the management of this agreement.

Quarterly Review:

The Area Manager or his/her nominated representative will meet with the Cleaning Services Manager or his/her representative at the end of each quarter (June, September, December and March) as part of the management of this Service Level Agreement. The meeting will be minuted by Housing and an electronic copy sent to ICC before the next review meeting.

Attendance at Other Meetings:

Housing and ICC staff will make themselves available to attend, report on performance and answer questions when required at other relevant meetings (e.g. TRA meetings and housing forums) as required by the Area Managers/Resident Services Managers/Resident Services Officers.

2020/21 Budget:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Estate Cleaning | £13,170,007.00 |
| Grounds Maintenance | £ 2,320,186.00 |
| Cleaning variations | £ 103, 500.00 |
| Total: | £15,593,693.1 |

Disputes:

Any disputes between the parties arising out of the interpretation or implementation of this Agreement will be resolved wherever possible by the relevant senior officers (Director of Resident Services and Head of Waste and Cleaning) or, failing agreement, by the Strategic Director of Environment & Leisure and the Strategic Director of Housing & Modernisation.

Signed by:

Signature.....Date.....

Name Robertson Egueye Position Area Manager - South

Signature Date.....

Name Nick Mellish Position Cleaning Manager

APPENDIX 1

ICC CONTRACT CHECK LIST

- i) A once daily presence to include: Litter picking, clearance of all fly tipping, spot-mopping or washing of spillages (over and above scheduled duties), dusting and sweeping.
- ii) A daily presence to include wet-mopping floors, wiping to clean all vertical surfaces, lamp covers and ceilings and the application of any approved solution designed to restrict the effects of misuse.
- iii) A daily presence, to remove Litter and anything else capable of being removed by sweeping.
- iv) Daily presence to include picking up and placing into rubbish bins dumped rubbish bags and cleaning spillages, rotating bins and paladins to ensure that that no full or nearly full container is located below a chute; and sweeping up.
- v) Daily inspection service checks to ensure all refuse chutes are clear of blockages.
- vi) A daily presence, to include the removal of litter, broken glass, graffiti and fly posting from sites, banks and a surrounding radius of 5 metres.
- vii) Litter Bins shall be emptied at a frequency to ensure that they do not overflow. In any event, should a Litter bin be more than three-quarters full, it shall be emptied. Any dumped rubbish or litter within 2 metres of the litter bin location shall be removed at the time of emptying the litter bin.
- viii) This service will include ongoing Cleansing of dog mess and other animal fouling as part of day to day operations.
- ix) There will be a twice-weekly presence to mop with water containing a measured amount of approved cleaning agent and finishing off with a dry mop to leave dry and safe. There must be at least three days between visits.
- x) There will be a weekly presence for Cleansing, which will include the removal of Litter, all sticky adhesions, bodily fluids, dog mess, leaves, unsightly stains and anything else capable of being removed by sweeping, washing or mopping. Drain gratings will be cleared.
- xi) Dog Waste Bins shall be emptied at a frequency to ensure that they do not become more than three-quarters full. Any spillage to the surrounding area (up to 2 metres) will be cleansed as part of this operation.
- xii) A monthly presence to include clearance of all fly tipping and litter and left swept clean of dirt, dust and gravel. Drainage channels, hoppers, grilles to be left clear of all detritus so as to afford a clear run for surface drain water. This task applies to canopies, flat and pitch roofs which are no more than 4 metres above ground level
- xiii) A monthly presence to include the employment of all or any suitable cleaning methods so as to leave the areas in question clean and free from dirt, dust and Graffiti. The specification for window cleaning in this item is only applicable to glazed areas of screens and doors
- xiv) Internal fixtures and fittings (including signs, door beadings, kick plates, meter cupboards etc.)
- xv) The washing through hosing and/or steam or pressure washing, in order to achieve a clean area upon completion on a quarterly basis
- xvi) The washing of all dog waste bins on a six-monthly basis.
- xvii) A twice-yearly service to be provided on demand to include cleansing using water containing an approved cleaning agent. Additional use of patent cleaning agents to remove paint, burns, ink, etc may be necessary. Walls to be rinsed and wiped dry using a clean cloth.
- xviii) A twice-yearly service to be provided on demand to include the polishing of existing polished vinyl floors by mechanical means using approved polishing and protective agents as necessary to achieve a high standard of cleanliness with a protected surface.
- xix) The washing of all litter bins on an annual basis.
- xx) Once-yearly service to streets and housing estates, provided on demand, to include cleansing using a solution of water and suitable, approved cleaning additive (except in the case of electrical fittings) and / or polishing and dry-wiping as necessary and suitable to ensure the cleanliness of the fitting upon completion.
- xxi)
- xxii) Application of herbicides shall be on the prior written approval of the Authorised Officer and be limited to a maximum of 3 applications a year from April to September
- xxiii) All horticultural arising, stones, litter, leaves (all seasons), dog mess, general debris, sharps, broken glass to be disposed of or recycled and obstructions removed and where appropriate disposed or recycled. Grass to be no longer than 30mm or less than 10mm immediately after cutting and not longer than 50mm between cuts.

- xxiv) All beds, plant containers and hedge bases to be maintained in a clean, litter and weed-free condition at all times. An allowance of 10% weed infestation with no single weed in excess of 30mm in height or spread at any time will be allowed between weeding operations.
- xxv) Works required as part of the winter maintenance regime will include the removal of snow and ice from footways and other hard-surface areas, and the gritting or salting of footways and other hard-surface areas. Particular attention will be required to clear and salt pedestrian access to main thoroughfares and pavements, and housing estates areas in particular ramps, access to doorways, Sheltered Housing Units, paths and vehicular access to bin chambers and key routes through estates
- xxvi) The contractor will provide a pro-active, rapid response service to identify, collect and remove fly tipping on street areas and housing estates. This may include but not be limited to household furniture, fridges, cookers, tyres, and deposits of soil, rubble and spoil. It will also include all non-trade waste rubbish and plastic bags and black bags left in the public realm other than at times designated for normal refuse collection. The contractor will provide a pro-active, rapid response service to identify, collect and remove fly tipped clinical waste, including animal carcasses, on street areas and housing estates with or without instruction from the area management officer.
- xxvii) The contractor will provide a pro-active, rapid response service to identify and remove graffiti and fly posting on the walls or surfaces of all publicly owned structures on or abutting street areas and housing estates as well as trees with or without instruction from the area management officer and apply an appropriate anti-graffiti finish as necessary.
- xxviii) The provision of a responsive presence on demand in accordance with the response times set out below to include the use of any physical or mechanical means to leave chutes clear and free running.

APPENDIX 2

CLEANSING AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SLA SCHEDULE FOR ALL HOUSING ESTATES - SUMMARY

| Task | Standard | Response Time | Performance Indicators |
|---|---|--|---|
| Litter Bins cleansing and emptying at such a frequency that they do not overflow, and in any event are emptied when more than three-quarters full. The annual washing of litter bins. Installation and re-siting as required, removal and replacement of damaged litter bins and reporting of damaged or missing litter bins | Litter bins and their surrounding area clean and completely clear of litter | Washing, 3 working days; installation etc 7 working days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident service requests Member service requests - Client Inspection results - Number of bins full/overflowing Compliance to washing standards |
| Dog Waste Bin cleansing and emptying at such frequency that they do not become more than three-quarters full. The six-monthly washing of dog waste bins. | Dog waste bins and surrounding areas completely clear of dog waste and litter | As above | As above |
| Recycling Sites Cleansing daily presence, to include the removal of litter, broken glass, graffiti and fly posting from sites, banks and a surrounding radius of 5 metres | Grade A | 6/12 hrs grades C&D. | % of sites that are of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness; Number of customer service requests |
| Pro-active, rapid response service to identify, collect and remove fly tipping | Grade A | Estates – 24 hours | Time taken to clear fly tipping |
| Pro-active, rapid response service to identify, collect and remove fly tipped clinical waste , including hazardous waste and animal carcasses. Cleanse and disinfect any area found to be stained or soiled after the waste has been removed | Grade A | 1 hour | Time taken to clear fly tipped clinical waste |
| Pro-active, rapid response service to identify and remove graffiti and fly posting from internal and external walls or surfaces of all publicly owned structures as well as trees, and apply an appropriate anti-graffiti finish as necessary | Area free of graffiti and fly posting | Racist and Obscene - 4 hours. Other – 24 hours | Response times |
| Provide services as necessary to deal with emergencies 24 hours per day on all days of | Highest | 1 hour | Response times |

| Task | Standard | Response Time | Performance Indicators |
|---|--|--|--|
| the year. For example, flooding, road traffic accidents, civil emergencies, toxic and other spillages, collection and disposal of any matter which requires urgent attention | operational standards | | |
| Removing weed growth and vegetation growing in or from footways, carriageways, other hard surface areas and tree bases | See specification Appendix 1 | 24 hours | Number of rectifications and defaults. Number of customer service requests |
| Winter maintenance removal of snow and ice from footways and other hard-surface areas, and the gritting or salting of footways and other hard-surface areas. clear and salt pedestrian access, in particular ramps, access to doorways, and vehicular access to bin chambers and key routes through estates A plan is to be produced and agreed with area management setting out priority areas | Cleared and gritted/ salted within the timescale agreed with Area Management | Meet response times agreed with Area Management per occasion | Response times. Service requests/ complaints |
| A once daily presence to include the removal of litter and anything else capable of being removed by sweeping, with additional support from rapid response teams - to external hard landscape areas , including vehicle roadways, pedestrian walkways and pavements, external stairways, car parking areas and hard and soft surface play areas | Grade A | 24 hours | % of Housing estates that are high or acceptable standard of cleanliness; Number of customer service requests |
| A once daily presence to include: Litter picking, clearance of all fly tipping, spot-mopping or washing of spillages (over and above scheduled duties), dusting and sweeping – to housing estates internal communal areas | The area is clean | 24 hours | As above, for internal communal areas |
| A once daily litter picking presence with additional support from rapid response teams for fly tipping removal – to soft landscape areas | Grade A | 24 hours | As above, for soft landscape areas |
| Twice-weekly presence to mop with water containing a measured amount of approved cleaning agent and finishing off with a dry mop to leave dry and safe to housing estates internal communal areas . There must be at least three days between visits. 'Wet Surface' signs must be in place until the area has dried | The area is clean | 24 hours | As above for internal communal areas |
| A daily presence to include deck scrubbing or wet-mopping floors (as appropriate), wiping to clean all vertical surfaces, doors, lamp covers and ceilings and the application of an approved solution designed to restrict the effects of misuse; the clearing of door runners and cleaning of all internal and external lift control panels – to lifts in housing estates | The area is clean | 24 hours | As above for housing estate lifts |
| A twice-yearly on demand wall washing service to housing estates, to include cleansing using appropriate equipment and water containing an approved cleaning agent. Additional use of patent cleaning agents to remove paint, burns, ink, etc may be necessary. Walls to be rinsed and wiped dry using a clean cloth – to a height of 2m | Walls are clean | 7 days | As above for housing estate walls |
| A twice-yearly on demand ceiling washing service to housing estates, include cleansing | Ceilings are | 7 days | As above for housing |

| Task | Standard | Response Time | Performance Indicators |
|--|--|---|---|
| using appropriate tools and waters containing an approved cleaning agent. Additional use of special cleaning agents to remove paint, burns, ink, etc may be necessary. Ceilings to be rinsed and wiped dry using a clean cloth – providing ceiling height less than 2m | clean | | estate ceilings |
| A twice-yearly service on demand internal vinyl floor polishing service to housing estates, to include polishing by mechanical means using brushes and polishing pads suitable for the purpose, using appropriate approved polishing and protective agents. The removal of old polish element is charged as ad-hoc | Clean with a protected surface | 7 days | As above for housing estate vinyl floors |
| An annual on demand external fixture and fittings cleaning service to streets and housing estates, to include cleansing using a solution of water and suitable, approved Cleaning and / or polishing and dry-wiping as necessary and suitable to ensure the cleanliness of the fitting upon completion | Clean external fixture and fittings | 7 days | As above for housing estate external fixture and fittings |
| A monthly internal fixtures and fittings cleaning service to housing estates, to include cleansing using a solution of water and suitable, approved cleaning additive (except in the case of electrical fittings) and / or polishing and dry-wiping as necessary and suitable to ensure the cleanliness of the fitting upon completion | Clean internal fixture and fittings | 7 days | As above for housing estate internal fixture and fittings |
| A monthly flat and pitch roof and canopy cleansing services to housing estates, to include clearance of all fly tipping and litter and left swept clean of dirt, dust and gravel. Drainage channels, hoppers, and grilles to be left clear of all detritus so as to afford a clear run for surface drain water – dependant on safe access | Grade A | 24 hours | As above for housing estate roofs and canopies |
| A monthly entrance door and screen cleaning services (with additional support from rapid response teams for graffiti) to housing estates, to include the employment of all or any suitable cleaning methods so as to leave the areas in question clean and free from dirt, dust and graffiti. The specification for window cleaning is applicable to glazed areas of screens and doors | Clean block entrance doors and screens | 24 hours | As above for housing estate entrance doors and screens |
| Bin chamber Cleansing services (with additional support form rapid response teams for fly tipping) to housing estates through – a daily presence to include placing into rubbish bins dumped rubbish bags and spillage, rotation of bins and paladins so as to ensure that that no full or nearly full container is located below a chute; and sweeping. The washing through hosing and/or steam or pressure washing, in order to achieve a clean area upon completion on a quarterly basis | Clean bin chambers | Daily tasks 4 hours; quarterly tasks 24 hours | As above for housing estate bin chambers |
| Trailer bay Cleansing services (with additional support form rapid response teams for fly tipping) to housing estates through - A daily presence to include placing into rubbish bins dumped rubbish bags and spillage, rotation of bins and paladins so as to ensure that that no full or nearly full container is located below a chute; and sweeping. The washing through hosing and/or steam or pressure washing, in order to achieve a clean area upon completion on a quarterly basis | Clean trailer bays | Daily tasks 4 hours; quarterly tasks 24 hours | As above for housing estate trailer bays |
| Blocked refuse chute clearing services on housing estates through - the provision of a responsive presence on demand to include the use of any physical or mechanical means to | Clean chute | 2 hours | As above for housing estate chutes |

| Task | Standard | Response Time | Performance Indicators |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| leave chutes clear and free running unless the chute itself needs cutting. The provision of a daily inspection service to check that all refuse chutes are clear of blockages | | | |
| The contractor will provide a daily internal building general cleaning service in all area housing management office working areas, reception areas, toilets, kitchens, interview and meeting rooms, internal stairs, hallways, landings and lifts. A six-monthly on demand cleansing of all horizontal surfaces such as window cills and reveals, ledges, clear shelf spaces, desks, ducting and boxing, top areas of pipe work | All areas are clean | Daily tasks 4 hours; six-monthly tasks 12 hours | As above for area housing management internal buildings |
| Twice-yearly on demand window cleaning services to housing estate blocks communal areas, to include windows being washed inside and out using water containing an approved cleaning agent; water to be applied using suitable tool and cleaned off using squeegee or similar. Task to be completed using chamois leather to polish dry, leaving window clean and free of dirt, smears and water-runs – “Windows within this task to include all ground floor windows, and the inside of all communal windows which are accessible using step ladders no higher than 1.8m | Clean windows | 12 hours | As above for housing estate blocks windows in communal areas |
| A weekly external balcony cleansing services to housing estates, to include the removal of litter, all sticky adhesions, bodily fluids, dog mess, leaves, unsightly stains and anything else capable of being removed by sweeping, washing or mopping. Drain gratings will be cleared | Grade A | 4 hours | As above for housing estate external balconies |
| Throughout the year grass maintenance to estates, highway verges and other grassed areas | See full specification – Appendix 1 | 2 hours | % comparable to the Royal Horticultural Society’s published standards for best horticultural practice; Number of customer service requests |
| Throughout the year dispose of or recycle all horticultural arisings, litter and general debris from rose and shrub beds, plant containers and hedge bases during all maintenance operations, to good professional horticultural practice | As above | 12 hours | As above |
| Throughout the year pruning and trimming of roses, shrubs, hedges and climbing plant growth to encourage the horticultural attributes of the plants, mitigate nuisance and obstruction, and carried out to good professional horticultural practice | As above | 4 hours | As above |
| Throughout the year young (including semi-mature) and mature trees up to 2m will be maintained to good professional arboriculture practice | As above | 12 hours | As above |

Appendix 3 - Performance Targets

| KPI | TARGET |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Estates graded good or excellent | 94% of |
| Reduction in complaints on 2018/2019 figures | 10% |
| Complaints to be responded to within target times | 90% |
| Report on all complaints received - Breakdown in complaints by subject, learning and actions taken | QUARTERLY REVIEW MEETINGS |
| Residents satisfied with the up keep of their estate | 78% |
| Rectification of all underperformance notices from officers responded to within timescales | 100% |
| Default notices responded to within timescales | 100% |

Estate inspection scoring guidelines

| Area inspected | Score 1-2 (Very Poor) | Score 3-4 (Unsatisfactory) | Score 5-6 (Moderate) | Score 7-8 (Good) | Score 9-10 (Excellent) |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| Estate Cleanliness (Interior and Exterior) | Overall appearance dirty. Widespread litter, graffiti, rubbish, and unremoved waste items. Bin stores / refuse chutes unsanitary. Evidence of fly-tipping (dumped items). Dog-waste bins full, litter bins over 75% full, litter in play area and car parks | Some areas need further cleaning, or have large amounts of litter, fly-tipping (dumped items), or graffiti. Bin stores/refuse chutes may need attention. Dog-waste and litter bins may need attention | Appearance acceptable, but evidence of dumped items, litter, or graffiti. Some need for further cleaning and tidying. | Cleanliness generally satisfactory. Perhaps some marks, litter or minor graffiti – but only in isolated areas. | All areas including play areas and car parks clean, good appearance, free from litter and cobwebs. Bin stores secure, refuse chutes clear, clean, and disinfected. |
| Gardening and grounds | Plants and grassed area extensively overgrown and damaged. | Plants and grassed area overgrown. Rubbish in hedges and shrubs. | Appearance and visibility acceptable. But grass overgrown, or pruning/weeding of plants. | Grounds attractive. Only slight gardening work required. | Grounds, gardens and grassed area neat and attractive. |

Appendix 5 - Rectification and Default Process

Remedies available to the client (area management)

Performance rectification notice

1. All notices relating to performance defaults which the client has the power to issue will be issued by the designated officer/s or their nominated deputies.
2. If the service provider commits a performance default, the authorised officer may, but is not obliged to (and without prejudice other right or remedy available to the client) issue a rectification notice.

The rectification notice shall be by email to the ICC local supervisor, copied to the service manager and ICC portfolio holder.

3. The rectification notice will reference the relevant inspection record and the specific failure to provide a service in accordance with the SLA and the performance standards. It must include details of the scoring guidelines (see Appendix 4):
4. The rectification notice will provide an opportunity for the ICC service provider to remedy the breach of the SLA or performance standard to the timescales identified in the performance standard.
5. The ICC service provider will notify the client immediately by email supported by photographic evidence when the default has been remedied which the client will confirm by inspection if required.
6. Following service of a rectification notice (see “Performance against the contract” on page 4) if ICC should fail to rectify under performance within the timescale/s set out in the rectification notice the client (“the Area Manager”) may issue a **default notice** in writing setting out the details of the ICC's default.
7. A rectification notice issued in accordance with this Rectification and Default Process shall be specific to a task or group of tasks, or a breach of this agreement and shall specify the failure or defect in performance, the remedy required and the time within which it shall be carried out.

Performance default notice

8. The default notice will be sent by email to the ICC service manager copied to the ICC portfolio holder. The default notice must specify the location and rectification not remedied
9. The default notice may specify any of the following actions on the ICC service provider:
 - Require the service provider to take immediate action and within 48 hours to rectify the performance default identified. The service provider must inform the relevant officer/persons with written/photographic evidence that the performance default has been rectified for the default notice to be closed.
 - Require the Service provider to prepare and implement an action plan which shall be approved by the authorised officer to prevent the performance default from occurring again.
 - Require the Service provider to engage a third party to rectify the performance default at the service provider 's expense; and/or
 - Require the Service provider to provide additional services or additional resources for a limited period to meet the Service Level Agreement standard in the affected area; and/or
 - Require the Service provider to prepare and implement a performance management framework approved by the authorised officer; and/or
 - Require the Service provider to issue letter/s of apology to parties affected by the performance default ; and/or
 - Require the Service provider to review any operating procedures, method statements and resource levels and the submission of a report on the same to the Authorised officer
10. The Service provider shall comply with and implement all the remedies set out in the default notice within any time period set out in the default notice or, if none, within a reasonable time commensurate with the nature of the performance default at the determination of the client.
11. A second default notice may be issued by the Area Manager where ICC has failed to comply with the first default notice.
12. Where ICC fails to comply with any/either of the default notices, the Area Manager shall be entitled to issue further default notices as appropriate.

13. For the avoidance of doubt this agreement shall not be exclusive. In the event of a consistent failure by ICC to comply with a default notice the Area Manager may arrange for Resident Services to carry out any part of the Service or services of a similar nature itself or to procure a third party to do so.

Escalation

14. The parties recognise that persistent breaches which result in the issuing of default notices may have a serious detriment to the services and the reputation of the client.
15. Accordingly, if the authorised officer issues default notices on a regular basis and, in doing so, reasonably and fairly believes that a trend is apparent and/or that the Service provider is fundamentally failing to resource or manage the Services adequately he/she may require the local cleaning Supervisor to attend a meeting or series of meetings to identify the problems and to require the Service provider to put into place at the Service provider's expense and within **one week** an action plan to stop the trend and prevent repeated performance defaults occurring.
16. If the trend or regularity of the performance defaults continues, the authorised officer may require the Service provider to put into effect at the Service provider's expense an Action Plan devised fairly and reasonably by the client.
17. In the event that the service provider fails to complete any services as detailed on the Default Notice, the ICC portfolio holder may issue further Default Notices until such time as the services are completed
18. If the trend and/or number of default notices does not reduce, the authorised officer may treat the matter as a repudiatory breach of the Service Level Agreement.

Dispute resolution

19. Any issues with the SLA which cannot be resolved locally should be referred to Area management divisional lead officer who will raise the matter with ICC Service Manager

| Mess Room | Address |
|----------------------|--|
| Abbeyfield Estate | Mossington Gardens, Abbeyfield Rd, SE16 |
| Adams Gardens Estate | Side of 134 Adams Gardens, Rotherhithe, SE16 |
| Addy House | Rotherhithe New Road, SE16 |
| Astley Cooper Estate | Nr Rowcross Street, Bermondsey SE16 |
| Bonamy Estate | Masters Drive, Bermondsey SE16 |
| Brydale House | Rotherhithe New Road, SE16 |
| Canada Estate | Regina point, Canada Estate, Bermondsey , SE16 |
| Dickens Estate | Haversham Hse, Scott Lidgett Crescent, Bermondsey SE16 |
| Dickens Estate | Parkers Row, By Wade Hall, Bermondsey, SE1 |
| Lockwood Square | Clements rd, Bermondsey, SE16 |
| Maria Close | 9 Maria Close, Bermondsey SE16 |
| Neckinger Estate | Next to number 247 Neckinger Estate, SE16 |
| Osprey Estate | Tawny Way, Osprey Estate, Lower, SE16 |
| Rennies Estate | Trevethick House, Rennie Estate, SE16 |
| Setchell Estate | Setchell Way, Bermondsey SE16 |
| St.Saviours Estate | St.Vincent House, St. Saviours Estate, SE1 |
| Thorburn Square | Top of Longley Street, Bermondsey SE16 |
| Tustin Estate | Manor Grove, Bermondsey SE16 |

| Mess Room | Address |
|------------------|---|
| Congrieve/Barlow | Offham House, Congrieve Estate, SE17 |
| Cooks Road | Next to 40 Cooks Rd, SE17 |
| Crompton House | Rockingham Estate, County Street, SE1 |
| Michael Faraday | Aylesbury Estate, SE17 |
| Newington Estate | 77 Canterbury Place, Off Penton Place, SE17 |
| Prospect House | Gaywood Street, SE1 |
| Redman House | Redman House Estate, Borough High Street, SE1 |
| Shere House | Tabard Gardens Estate, Globe Street, SE1 |
| Vaughan House | Nelson Square, Blackfriars Rd, SE1 |
| Kinglake Estate | Next to Leysdown House, Kinglake Estate, SE17 |
| Browning Estate | Football pitch in front of Tennyson House |
| Pincombe House | Room opposite Pincombe House |
| Draper House | Room at r/o Draper house |

| Mess Room | Address |
|---------------------|---|
| Castlemead Est | Wyndham Rd, Camberwell, SE5 |
| Champion Hill | Leacon Hse Drying Room, Monclar Rd, SE5 |
| Crawford Est | Witham Hse, Crawford Rd, Camberwell, SE5 |
| Denmark Hill Est | 25 Sunray Ave, Dulwich SE24 |
| Dog Kennel Hill Est | 2 Ringmer House, Dog Kennel Hill, SE22 |
| Friary Est | Applegarth House drying room next to No 1-Peckham Park Rd, SE15 |
| Glebe Est | At the end of Longleigh House drying room -Benhill Rd, SE5 |
| Goldsmith Est | Jarvis House next to No 25 Goldsmith Rd, Peckham, SE15 |
| Ledbury Est | Royston House, Green Hundred Rd, P SE15. |
| Lettsom Est | Opposite Fearnley House next to silo- Lettsom St, Camberwell , SE5. |
| Milton House | Milton House, Elmington Estate, Elmington Rd, Camberwell, SE5 |
| Sceaux Gardens Est | 1 st Floor Fontenele House drying room- Dalwood St, SE15 |
| Wickway Court | Gloucester Grove Estate, Peckham, SE15 |

| Mess Room | Address |
|----------------------|---|
| Barset Estate | BARSET RD, NUNHEAD, SE15 |
| Brimmington Estate | CULMORE RD, PECKHAM, SE15 |
| Clifton | WHITCOMBE POINT, CLAYTON RD, SE15 |
| Cossall Estate | COSSALL WALK, PECKHAM, SE15 |
| Croxted Road Estate | CROXTED RD, DULWICH SE21 |
| Crystal Court | COLLEGE ROAD, DULWICH, SE21 |
| East Dulwich Estate | HILLSBORO RD, EAST DULWICH SE22 |
| Kingswood Estate | DOWELL HSE, OFF DULWICH WOOD PARK, SE21 |
| Lordship Lane Estate | BEW COURT, LORDSHIP LANE, E. DULWICH SE22 |
| Nunhead Estate | GLOVER HOUSE, PECKHAM, SE15 |
| Pelican Estate | CRANE HSE, PELICAN ESTATE, SE15 |
| Rye Hill Estate | 108-208 RYE HILL PK, PECKHAM, SE15 |
| Sydenham Hill Estate | PARFEW HSE, SYDENHAM HILL SE26 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Item No. 8. | Classification: Open | Date: 14 October 2020 | Meeting Name: Housing and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission |
| Report title: | | Scrutiny Review of Community Hubs - supporting the needs of the most vulnerable | |
| Ward(s) or groups affected: | | All | |
| From: | | Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities | |

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the housing and community engagement scrutiny commission note the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Southwark Community Hub

2. The Southwark Community Hub was set up in response to the pandemic and resulting lockdown to provide support for vulnerable residents, including social support and access to essential food and other essential supplies. Initially a local authority initiative in Southwark the Community Hub quickly evolved to become a joint-initiative between the council, voluntary and community sector (VCS) and health providers.
3. Through this partnership, the Southwark Community Hub delivered significantly more than the basic offer proposed by central government.
4. Support has been provided to three core groups:
 - Shielded residents (those clinically extremely vulnerable to Covid-19), including interim deliveries while central government food deliveries were put in place
 - Residents voluntarily shielding or in a group requiring strict social distancing who require support with essential food and other social support
 - Residents vulnerable or food insecure because of Covid-19, including loss of income or requiring additional social support
5. Operating under a steering group with representatives from the Council, VCS and local health service, and a range of smaller cross-sector working groups, over the period of lockdown the Community Hub developed a range of core offers as set out below.
 - ***Borough wide point of access*** - a Covid-19 emergency phone line and email inbox was provided and staffed by the council, offering a borough wide point of contact for vulnerable residents to self-refer for support or to make a referral on

behalf of friends or family. This gave access to a full range of support provided by the VCS, council, health and business partners.

- **Triage and case-management function** - Collecting contact information and assessing immediate support needs, these joint wellbeing assessments ensured that the most critical information was gathered by the council and partners for any onward referrals.
 - **Proactive wellbeing calls** - outward wellbeing calls were made to all shielded residents. This was supplemented by efforts of partners to contact existing service users and share and rationalise lists of those in receipt of support where appropriate and safe to do so.
 - **Food deliveries** - provision of food parcels has been one of the main focal points of the Community Hub, although by no means the limit of the offer. Something over 25,000 good quality healthy food parcels have been provided to date both direct by the council and through 8 local voluntary sector hubs.
 - **Medical support needs** - the partners worked with the NHS, GP Federations and local pharmacies to support the delivery of prescriptions to shielded and vulnerable residents.
 - **Non-medical needs** - beyond immediate food and medical requests, the Community Hub has also retained a focus on social and wider support needs, including telephone befriending and access to debt and welfare advice.
 - **Referral and reporting system** - establishing quick channels of communication VCS and external partners have been critical to the operations of the hub, ensuring that residents can access the support that they require close to home. With central triage and assessment functions carried out at the centre through the single point of access, a simple and quick means of making outwards referrals and linking residents to neighbourhood food hubs or other local means of support was developed.
6. Since the establishment of the Hub it has provided support to many thousand Southwark residents and delivered over 25,000 parcels of food to those most in need. In total there were over 20,000 contacts made with residents.
7. Although by no means the limit of the offer, the provision of food parcels has been one of the main focal points of the Community Hub, although by no means the limit of the offer (see below). Broadly, food parcels have been arranged through two means:
- Direct from the council - over 25,000 food parcels have been delivered by the council directly to residents. Southwark Building Services staff have sorted and delivered food packages to residents on the council delivery list. These packages have included non-food and non-perishable goods purchased wholesale, supplemented by two donated Fareshare deliveries per week (150 parcels) and fresh produce sourced from New Covent Garden and Borough Markets.
 - Distributed through neighbourhood food hubs - food deliveries have also been made through a network of neighbourhood food hubs, spread across the borough: Pecan, Pembroke House, Albrighton Community Centre,

Central Southwark Community Hub, St George the Martyr, Time and Talents, Paxton Green and Lewington.

8. These neighbourhood hubs all stepped forward to offer additional support through the crisis and have developed delivery and collection models to distribute food parcels to local residents. The council has provided funding, logistics and supply support to these hubs based on local needs and capacity. Individual hubs have also leveraged their own resources and external funding to grow and develop activity, often significantly.
9. The neighbourhood hubs have also been bolstered considerably by the efforts of regional charities such as the London Food Alliance and Hubbub supporting access to surplus food and fridges, as well as local businesses Fooditude, Bermondsey Employment Skills and Training and London based environmental charity Hubbub who have pivoted to provide access to equipment or cooked meals to supplement food parcels.
10. Through the course of its operation there were a number of other organisations that the council provided bulk food deliveries to. This included TRAs, foodbanks, faith organisations and sheltered housing units.
11. There is a strong geographically based food network on the ground that can reach people. This extended beyond the neighbourhood hubs. Southwark Pensioners Centre, for example, worked with Central Southwark Community Hub to source food parcels and organise delivery via volunteers to older people. The arrangements set out in this report are intended to provide coverage of the whole borough moving forward.
12. On the 16th June the Cabinet recognised and agreed to continue to support the significant efforts of the Community Hub in assisting the most vulnerable residents during the worst impact of the pandemic. Cabinet requested that a further report on the learning to date and longer term approach be brought back to cabinet for agreement in September 2020.
13. During July and August, a partnership Review Group considered evidence and feedback from residents and partners. It made recommendations on lessons learned from this work that were intended guide the work of the council, voluntary and community sector, NHS and wider partners and funders from September 2020 onwards.
14. The speed and scale of the partnership-working involved in the Community Hub response to Covid-19 has been unprecedented. Between the Council, VCS and health partners we have established: a borough wide front-door for vulnerable residents; a network of neighbourhood distribution centres; new cross-sector referrals routes and data-sets.
15. In addition to this work on the Community Hub, across the borough a new wave of residents responded to the pandemic by offering support locally, whether through traditional volunteering routes or by establishing street-based mutual aid groups, and a swathe of established faith, community and tenants and residents groups have stepped forward to help those particularly in need.

16. In many ways, we achieved more together in the past 6 months than we have in recent years. We now have the opportunity to build on the successes of this partnership-working to lay a long-lasting legacy for Southwark.
17. It is clear that a huge amount was achieved in a quick space of time to support those most vulnerable through the Covid-19 crisis. There has been a strong view of all partners that overall things have gone well and that there is a lot we can build on for the future.

The Community Hub Review Group

18. The rapid review group was established in order to hear evidence from partners from across sectors on the response to date and views on priorities for the future of the Community Hub. The review also sought to capture the lessons of the partnership-working to date.
19. A number of key findings have emerged through this evidence concerning the challenges and opportunities facing the borough that have helped to frame the recommendations on the development of the community hub.

Summary of key findings and recommendations of the review group

20. The review report notes that building a longer-term legacy from the community hub means facing a number of challenges. Until there is an effective vaccine or treatment for Covid-19 we need to manage the transition from the currently emergency phase of the crisis through the next phases of lockdown, as well as remain prepared to scale-up activity again based on any future spikes in the virus. The first two recommendations covered this transition period.
21. As set out in the key findings, the review process has touched on a number of wide-ranging issues that will require concerted work by partners over the longer-term. The review group identified a number of these contingencies and makes recommendations for how these areas of work could be aligned with the framework set out for the borough.
22. **Transition Recommendations:**
 - **Recommendation 1 – A Managed Transition:** That all partners put in place a managed transition for people supported by the COVID19 Community Hub, stepping down support where it is no longer needed and ensuring people who need ongoing assistance are matched with the appropriate support.
 - **Recommendation 2 – The Emergency Operating Model:** The council and partners should agree a Covid19 community support plan that sets out the emergency operating model in the event of a further spike in Covid-19 or a further lockdown.
23. **Legacy Recommendations:**
 - (i) **Governing Recommendation: Building a Borough where everyone can contribute**
 - **Recommendation 3 – A new alliance:** The council, VCS and health partners should work together to strengthen and further develop a Southwark

community support alliance. This should be focused on providing social support that delivers long-term reductions in inequality, combining resources, building on the successes of the Community Hub, and founded on the vision, outcomes, principles and framework set out below.

(ii) Recommendations on related work

The issues raised at the review group have been wide-ranging and has touched on a range of issues that relate to work taken forward by other groups and initiatives. Here we set out a range of recommendations that would bring these workstreams into line with the framework and vision of our governing recommendation.

- **Recommendation 4 – Embedding services in neighbourhoods:** Partners should embed access to existing service provision within neighbourhoods. This should include testing new ways of providing housing, employment, skills, money, social care and immigration support in local communities - including testing how support from established public & VCS providers can be made accessible in partnership with local community ‘anchor’ organisations rooted in each part of the borough.
- **Recommendation 5 – Making the Most of Social Prescribing:** Health partners should explore how social prescribing can become a central element of the community support alliance.
- **Recommendation 6 – Building effective referral systems:** The council, VCS and health partners should develop and embed a social support referral system – building on the success of the work Community Southwark have been leading using the Airtable platform.
- **Recommendation 7 – Encouraging and Supporting Volunteering:** The review recognised the significant role that volunteers have played in supporting vulnerable people in the borough. The review group recommends that Community Southwark should work with partners to find ways to celebrate and support volunteering.
- **Recommendation 8 – Aligning plans for emergency food provision:** Partners should work with the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop a stronger common approach to emergency food provision, including establishing aligned criteria/thresholds, ways of avoiding duplication of service to individual people and shared relationships with food suppliers.
- **Recommendation 9 – Developing a common long-term approach to tackling food insecurity:** Partners should scale up community run low cost food projects - working through the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop options for affordable food provision that support people’s dignity and independence (including community supermarkets, pantries etc.), linked to the review of the food security plan.
- **Recommendation 10 – Understanding Southwark’s hidden populations:** Research should be undertaken to better understand Southwark’s population who do not have full recourse to public funds – to identify the scale of the

population and the issues they face. Working with the VCS groups that are currently supporting large number of people in this situation to undertake the research.

- **Recommendation 11 – Tackling Digital Exclusion:** There is an urgent need to prioritise connecting digitally excluded people, including identifying how access to devices and data can be improved for people who cannot currently afford them and strengthening digital skills.
- **Recommendation 12 – Supporting grassroots organisations:** Community Southwark should review how capacity building support in the borough can best support the development of Southwark social/ community support alliance together with development/implementation of a formal partnership model of delivery with Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.
- **Recommendation 13 – Leveraging existing funds:** Funders in Southwark and beyond should consider how they can best use their existing resources to support the delivery of these recommendations.
- **Recommendation 14 – Tackling inequalities:** The review group heard evidence on the significant disproportionate impact on some communities. The review therefore recommends that all partners should:
 - Undertake joint work to understand those who were and remain worst affected by Covid-19, for example BAME groups.
 - Improve the way they collect, use and act on data moving forward, covering all equalities groups.
- **Recommendation 15 – Principles for working together:** The partnership should adopt the following principles in working together:
 - Mutuality and reciprocity – people and organisations contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it.
 - Co-design – all partners and residents working together to design the alliance and share approaches and tools.
 - Clarity of purpose - working to a clear common purpose.
 - Collective resources – working to make the best uses of the resources we have in Southwark across the system and across all partners.
 - Operations not just strategy – getting on with practical work together across the system.
 - Relationships and communication - a partnership of equals across sectors.
 - Data and technology - Effective use of data and intelligence to achieve more.

Both this and recommendation 16 are key enablers to the longer term approach.

- **Recommendation 16 – Principles for providing support:** The partnership should adopt the following principles for providing support moving forward:

- Mutuality and reciprocity – people and communities contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it, and being valued for what they contribute.
- People are fully involved in identifying their needs and planning the support they receive.
- People have the opportunity to build on their strengths – planning of support helps individuals to identify their strengths at a personal and community level.
- People have access to the information, advice and guidance they need to meet their needs.
- People feel that they have access to services and less formal groups that improve their lives and wellbeing.

APPENDICES

| No. | Title |
|------------|--|
| Appendix 1 | Southwark Covid-19 Community Hub: Report of the Review Working Group |

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

| Background Papers | Held At | Contact |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Papers of the review working group | Communities Division, Environment & Leisure 160 Tooley Street | Stephen Douglass 0207 525 0886 |
| https://www.communitysouthwark.org/southwark-community-hub-one-stop-support-during-the-covid-19-coronavirus-crisis | | |
| September 2020 Cabinet report - Community Hub - supporting the needs of the most vulnerable | Communities Division, Environment & Leisure 160 Tooley Street | Stephen Douglass 0207 525 0886 |
| http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MIId=6662&Ver=4 | | |

AUDIT TRAIL

| | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Lead Member | Cllr Helen Dennis, Cabinet Member for Social Support and Homelessness | |
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Southwark Covid-19 Community Hub

Report of the Review Working Group

"In many ways, we have achieved more together in the past 5 months than we have in recent years. We now have the opportunity to build on the successes of this partnership-working to lay a long-lasting legacy for Southwark."

September 2020

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Preface

This report sets out the recommendations of the rapid review of Southwark's Community Hub response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In response to the pandemic partners in Southwark have established Community Hub arrangements to support local people through the pandemic. While the challenges have been significant, feedback on this work from partners and beneficiaries has been very positive, with many people reporting a leap forward in collaborative working across the council, voluntary and community sector and NHS.

This review has considered how we can build on the success of this work. It sets out recommendations on the best ways to continue to support our community through the pandemic whilst also maximising the long-term legacy of this work for the people of our borough: *to build a borough where everyone can participate*.

During July and August, the Review Group (described below) considered evidence and feedback from residents and partners. The recommendations are intended guide the work of the council, voluntary and community sector, NHS and wider partners and funders from September 2020 onwards.

Introduction

Opportunity

The speed and scale of the partnership-working involved in the Community Hub response to Covid-19 has been unprecedented. Between the Council, VCS and health partners we have established: a borough wide front-door for vulnerable residents; a network of neighbourhood distribution centres and new cross-sector referrals routes and data-sets.

In addition to this work on the Community Hub, across the borough a new wave of residents have responded to the pandemic by offering support locally, whether through traditional volunteering routes or by establishing street-based mutual aid groups, and a swathe of established faith, community and tenants and residents' groups have stepped forward to help those particularly in need.

In many ways, we have achieved more *together* in the past 5 months than we have in recent years. We now have the opportunity to build on the successes of this partnership-working to lay a long-lasting legacy for Southwark.

Challenge

There are, however, significant challenges that we will continue to face through the next phase of public health crisis, as well as post-vaccine or effective treatment.

The current pandemic has revealed, rather than caused, a food insecurity crisis and it has thrown a light on the significant number of residents within the borough who are facing underlying difficulties with debt, housing, employment or other aspects of daily life but may not be in receipt of benefits, social care packages or other formal offers of social support. These are long-term challenges that require a concerted and coordinated response across partners.

Although the working arrangements of the Community Hub are impressive, they are also not sustainable in their current form over the medium to longer-term. Partners are working at capacity and at spending levels that are unlikely to be viable given the economic challenges on the horizon.

We have mobilised around a clear public health crisis to work together in new ways but in what is likely to be a difficult economic and public health environment over coming years, the forces pulling us back to the status-quo will be strong.

We now need clear recommendations that sustain and build on the progress of recent months, in order to make the most of the resources we collectively have available to make a long-lasting impact on the underlying issues that have seen so many residents cast into a precarious position through the pandemic.

Summary of Recommendations

Building a longer-term legacy from the community hub means facing a number of challenges. Until there is an effective vaccine or treatment for Covid-19 we need to manage the transition from the currently emergency phase of the crisis through the next phases of lockdown, as well as remain prepared to scale-up activity again based on any future spikes in the virus. The first two recommendations set out below cover this transition period.

Second, we need a clear framework to build on the lessons and opportunities of the community hub work over the longer-term. This requires clarity of vision, operating model and underlying principles. Taken together, this framework forms the governing recommendation of this report.

Third, as set out in the key findings the review process has touched on a number of wide-ranging issues that will require concerted work by partners over the longer-term. We identify a number of these contingencies and make recommendations for how these areas of work could be aligned with the framework set out here for the borough.

Transition Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – A Managed Transition: That all partners put in place a managed transition for people supported by the COVID19 Community Hub, stepping down support where it is no longer needed and ensuring people who need ongoing assistance are matched with the appropriate support.

Recommendation 2 – The Emergency Operating Model: The council and partners should agree a Covid19 community support plan that sets out the emergency operating model in the event of a further spike in Covid-19 or a further lockdown.

Legacy Recommendations

(i) Governing Recommendation: *Building a Borough where everyone can contribute*

Recommendation 3 – A new alliance: The council, VCS and health partners should work together to strengthen and further develop a Southwark community support alliance. This should be focused on providing social support that delivers long-term reductions in inequality, combining resources, building on the successes of the Community Hub, and founded on the vision, outcomes, principles and framework set out below.

(ii) Recommendations on related work

The issues raised at the review group have been wide-ranging and has touched on a range of issues that relate to work taken forward by other groups and initiatives. Here we set out a

range of recommendations that would bring these workstreams into line with the framework and vision of our governing recommendation.

Recommendation 4 - Embedding services in neighbourhoods: Partners should embed access to existing service provision within neighbourhoods. This should include testing new ways of providing housing, employment, skills, money, social care and immigration support in local communities - including testing how support from established public & VCS providers can be made accessible in partnership with local community 'anchor' organisations rooted in each part of the borough.

Recommendation 5 – Making the Most of Social Prescribing: Health partners should explore how social prescribing can become a central element of the community support alliance.

Recommendation 6 – Building effective referral systems: The council, VCS and health partners should develop and embed a social support referral system – building on the success of the work Community Southwark have been leading using the Airtable platform.

Recommendation 7 – Encouraging and Supporting Volunteering: The review recognised the significant role that volunteers have played in supporting vulnerable people in the borough. The review group recommends that Community Southwark should work with partners to find ways to celebrate and support volunteering.

Recommendation 8 – Aligning plans for emergency food provision: Partners should work with the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop a stronger common approach to emergency food provision, including establishing aligned criteria/thresholds, ways of avoiding duplication of service to individual people and shared relationships with food suppliers.

Recommendation 9 - Developing a common long-term approach to tackling food insecurity: Partners should scale up community run low cost food projects - working through the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop options for affordable food provision that support people's dignity and independence (including community supermarkets, pantries etc.), linked to the review of the food security plan.

Recommendation 10 – Understanding Southwark's hidden populations: Research should be undertaken to better understand Southwark's population who do not have full recourse to public funds – to identify the scale of the population and the issues they face. Working with the VCS groups that are currently supporting large number of people in this situation to undertake the research.

Recommendation 11 – Tackling Digital Exclusion: There is an urgent need to prioritise connecting digitally excluded people, including identifying how access to devices and data can be improved for people who cannot currently afford them and strengthening digital skills.

Recommendation 12 – Supporting grassroots organisations: Community Southwark should review how capacity building support in the borough can best support the development of Southwark social/ community support alliance together with development/implementation of a formal partnership model of delivery with Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.

Recommendation 13 – Leveraging existing funds: Funders in Southwark and beyond should consider how they can best use their existing resources to support the delivery of these recommendations.

Recommendation 14 – Tackling inequalities: The review group heard evidence on the significant disproportionate impact on some communities. The review therefore recommends that all partners should:

- Undertake joint work to understand those who were and remain worst affected by Covid-19, for example BAME groups.
- Improve the way they collect, use and act on data moving forward, covering all equalities groups.

Recommendation 15 – Principles for working together: The partnership should adopt the following principles in working together:

- Mutuality and reciprocity – people and organisations contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it.
- Co-design – all partners and residents working together to design the alliance and share approaches and tools.
- Clarity of purpose - working to a clear common purpose.
- Collective resources – working to make the best uses of the resources we have in Southwark across the system and across all partners.
- Operations not just strategy – getting on with practical work together across the system.
- Relationships and communication - a partnership of equals across sectors.
- Data and technology - Effective use of data and intelligence to achieve more.

Both this and recommendation 16 are key enablers to the longer term approach.

Recommendation 16 – Principles for providing support: The partnership should adopt the following principles for providing support moving forward:

- Mutuality and reciprocity – people and communities contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it, and being valued for what they contribute.
 - People are fully involved in identifying their needs and planning the support they receive.
 - People have the opportunity to build on their strengths – planning of support helps individuals to identify their strengths at a personal and community level.
 - People have access to the information, advice and guidance they need to meet their needs.
 - People feel that they have access to services and less formal groups that improve their lives and wellbeing.
-

The Community Hub: story so far

The Southwark Community Hub was set up in response to the pandemic and resulting lockdown to provide support for vulnerable residents, including social support and access to essential food and other essential supplies. Initially a local authority initiative responding to a government directive, in Southwark the Community Hub quickly evolved to become a joint-initiative between the council, voluntary and community sector (VCS) and health providers.

This change came as a result of a recognition of the emerging scale of the crisis and the requirement to concentrate and coordinate resources to ensure that appropriate support could be provided to those most in need.

Through this partnership the Southwark Community Hub has delivered significantly more than the basic offer proposed by central government.

Support has been provided to three core groups:

1. Shielded residents, including interim deliveries while the government deliveries were put in place
2. Residents voluntarily shielding or in a group requiring strict social distancing who require support with essential food and other social support
3. Residents vulnerable or food insecure because of Covid-19, including loss of income or requiring additional social support

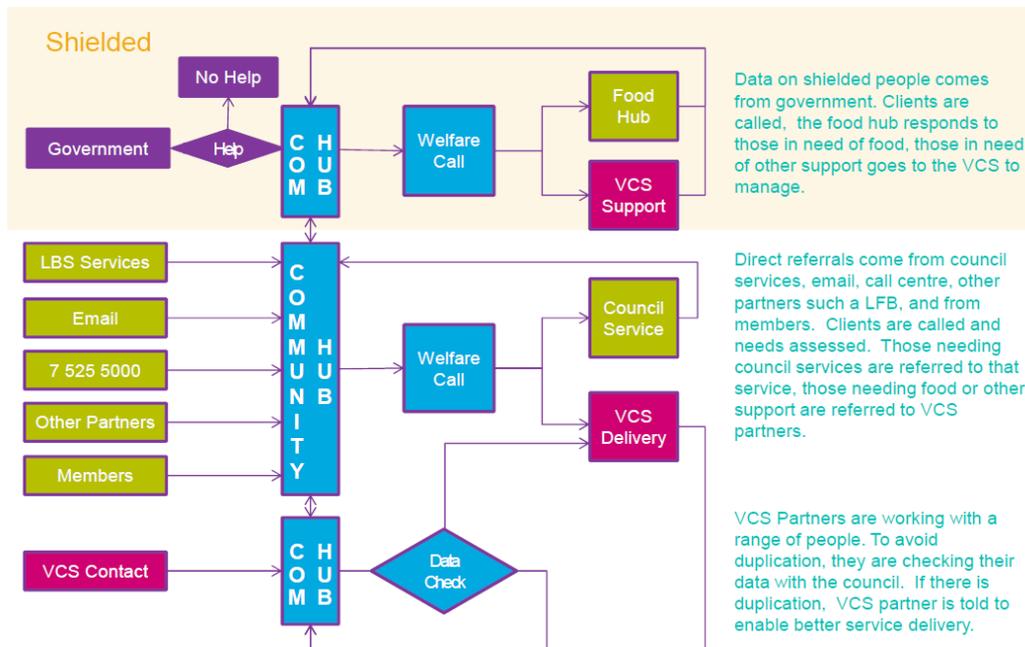
Operating under a steering group with representatives from the Council, VCS and local health service, and a range of smaller cross-sector working groups, over the period of lockdown the Community Hub has developed a range of core offers:

Borough wide point of access

A Covid-19 emergency phone line and email inbox was provided and staffed by the council, offering a borough wide point of contact for vulnerable residents to self-refer for support or to make a referral on behalf of friends or family.

Importantly this has given access to a full range of support provided by the VCS, council, health and business partners. As well as providing clarity of access for residents this shouldered the main burden of assessment and triage, relieving the pressure of dealing with new inward referrals from local VCS providers, many of whom were working at capacity in the early stages of lockdown to adapt existing provision or to contact and support existing services users.

Community Hub Referral Pathways



Triage and case-management function

Wellbeing and assessment scripts were developed for council call handlers alongside partners in the VCS and health service for use on all self-referrals and wellbeing calls (see below). Collecting contact information and assessing immediate support needs, these joint wellbeing assessments ensured that the most critical information was gathered by the council and partners for any onward referrals. Individual case-management support was offered by the complex cases team for the most complex cases.

Proactive wellbeing calls

Outward wellbeing calls were made to all shielded residents. This was supplemented by efforts of partners to contact existing service users and share and rationalise lists of those in receipt of support where appropriate and safe to do so.

Food deliveries

Although by no means the limit of the offer, the provision of food parcels has been one of the main focal points of the Community Hub, although by no means the limit of the offer (see below). Broadly, food parcels have been arranged through two means:

- Direct from the council - over 20,000 food parcels have been delivered by the council directly to residents. Southwark Building Services staff have sorted and delivered food packages to residents on the council delivery list. These packages have included non-food and non-perishable goods purchased wholesale, supplemented by two donated Fareshare deliveries per week (150 parcels) and fresh produce sourced from New Covent Garden and Borough Markets.

- b) Distributed through neighbourhood food hubs - food deliveries have also been made through a network of neighbourhood food hubs, spread across the borough: Pecan, Pembroke House, Albrighton Community Centre, Central Southwark Community Hub, St George the Martyr, Time and Talents, Paxton Green and Lewington.

These neighbourhood hubs all stepped forward to offer additional support through the crisis and have developed delivery and collection models to distribute food parcels to local residents. The council has provided funding, logistics and supply support to these hubs based on local needs and capacity. Individual hubs have also leveraged their own resources and external funding to grow and develop activity, often significantly.

The neighbourhood hubs have also been bolstered considerably by the efforts of regional charities such as the London Food Alliance and Hubbub supporting access to surplus food and fridges, as well as local businesses Fooditude, Bermondsey Employment Skills and Training and London based environmental charity Hubbub who have pivoted to provide access to equipment or cooked meals to supplement food parcels.

The position until the end of September is as follows:

- Individual food boxes are provided through a contract with New Covent Garden Market.
 - There are individual deliveries of 120 boxes of food per day which equates to 600 per week. These are delivered to Pedal Me at Cole Street at 7.30 every morning. Pedal Me take up to half of these to Pecan for Pedal Me's riders to collect and deliver.
 - The number of individual deliveries is currently reducing and is expected to fall significantly following calls to households on the delivery list to assess affordability or alternative options that are now available.
 - Bulk deliveries to the local hubs and other locations from the council are at 375 per week as follows:
 - 50 to Time and Talents (Wednesday)
 - 45 to St George the Martyr (Monday, Thursday and Friday)
 - 40 to Pembroke House (Tuesday)
 - 40 to Albrighton (Tuesday)
 - 40 to Lewington (Wednesday and Thursday)
 - 40 to Pecan (Thursday and Friday)
 - 40 to Paxton Green (Monday)
 - 40 to Central Southwark Food Bank (Tuesday and Thursday)
-

- 20 to Dads House Foodbank (Tuesday)
- 20 to St Matthews Foodbank (Friday)
- All other organisations (including TRAs) are now directed to the local hubs rather than receiving their own supply of food.

Through the course of its operation there were a number of other organisations that the council provided bulk food deliveries to. This included TRAs, foodbanks, faith organisations and sheltered housing units including:

- Acorn Estate
- Albrighton Centre
- Astley Cooper TRA
- Brandon Estate TRA
- Brook Drive Sheltered Housing Unit
- D'Eynsford TMO
- George Walter Court
- Harmon Close
- Keetons TRA
- Kingswood Estate TRA
- Leathermarket JMB
- Lew Evans House
- Lucy Brown House
- Marden
- Millpond TRA
- Nigerian National Community
- Nunhead Knocks Mutual Aid Group
- Old Kent Road Mosque
- Pedworth Sheltered Housing Unit
- St George the Martyr
- St Giles Foodbank
- Styles House TMO
- Sydenham Hill Estate TRA
- Sydenham Mutual Aid Group
- Tayo Situ House
- Tustin Estate TRA
- Walworth Living Room

There is a strong geographically based food network on the ground that can reach people. This extended beyond the neighbourhood hubs. Southwark Pensioners Centre, for example, worked with Central Southwark Community Hub to source food parcels and organise delivery via volunteers to older people. The arrangements set out in this report are intended to provide coverage of the whole borough moving forward.

Medical support needs

The partners worked with the NHS, GP Federations and local pharmacies to support the delivery of prescriptions to shielded and vulnerable residents. Should there be further lockdowns then this service will be scaled up again. Prior to Covid-19 there was an ongoing campaign encouraging sign-up to prescription deliveries but due to Covid-19 this service needed scaling up.

In setting this service up the GP federations and the CCG worked with the council to agree scripts concerning medicines delivery for the council's outbound calls to the shielded and others and for case managers receiving inbound calls at the council's community hub. If there are any difficulties with this, the hub can refer the patient to the Federations for support from the social prescribing link worker to liaise with their GP and pharmacy to resolve the issue.

The GP federations and the Southwark Medicines Optimisation team worked with the London Fire Brigade to agree a process to ensure delivery of medicines to those with cognitive impairment as GoodSAM does not take referrals for anyone with these needs.

Non-medical needs

Beyond immediate food and medical requests, the Community Hub has also retained a focus on social and wider support needs, including access to telephone befriending and to debt and welfare advice. Although many VCS activities and services have had to close or adapt through the crisis, an up-to-date view of service availability and capacity has been developed through regular surveys of the sector by Community Southwark.

As services have begun to re-open, or new activities emerge – such as those addressing digital inclusion through the provision of refurbished tablets and smartphones – these have been swiftly added to the new referral database (see below).

Referral and reporting system

Establishing quick channels of communication VCS and external partners have been critical to the operations of the hub, ensuring that residents can access the support that they require close to home. With central triage and assessment functions carried out at the centre through the boroughwide point of access, a simple and quick means of making outwards referrals and linking residents to neighbourhood food hubs or other local means of support was required.

Working with Pembroke House and Community Southwark a new system for making outward referrals was put in place rapidly using off the shelf software (Airtable). This has streamlined the process for outwards referrals from the hub to local providers and offers a platform to track and report on these referrals in real-time, including real-time updates on local service capacities. Created quickly at the outset of the problem this system provided a test-case for how appropriate use of software and technology could help with the development of services, including by identifying where there are gaps in provision that need to be filled. Future development will include operational users for future improvements

Key Statistics

The table below sets out an analysis of those who accessed support from the Hub:

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| Numbers of vulnerable people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the shielded list of just under 11,000 residents, the community hub has dealt with 10,021 vulnerable residents in council housing, 5,312 people with social care packages, 70 people via the No Recourse to Public Funds Service and 2,017 referrals/self-referrals from residents living in non-council temporary accommodation |
| Calls to the support line | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April, there were almost 3,000 calls received relating to the COVID-19 outbreak via the centralised COVID support line. Most calls relate to food requests (26%), shopping needs (20%) or medical or isolation advice (17%). |
| Age UK proactive contact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age UK Southwark & Lewisham have proactively contacted 3,100 clients including welfare checks to everyone over the age of 68 known to the team in 2019. And delivered 9,979 hot meals and 397 grocery packs, and made 704 Food2You deliveries. |
| Southwark Pensioners Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southwark Pensioners Centre delivered 950 food parcels to older people across the borough. |
| Walworth Community Food Hub | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between mid-March and July, the Walworth Community Food hub has delivered over 12,700 food parcels, containing 100 tonnes of food to more than 600 households per week in the Walworth area. |
| Referral numbers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been an average of 46 new referrals a week, and an average of 8 households no longer requiring food. |
| Shielded Numbers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of Southwark residents on the shielded list peaked at 10,765. As of 1 July, this had fallen to 9,888. As of 21 August 2020 this stands at 10,518 Southwark residents. |
| Age of shielded residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over half (53%) of people on the shielded list are 50-79 years. |
| Age of those requiring support from the hub | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration rates for support via the hub were highest for those aged 40-79. Older shielders were less likely to have requested food deliveries from central govt. |
| Location of those shielding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 73% of shielders are in the most deprived 40% of the population. Wards with largest shielding populations are – Nunhead and Queens Road, Newington, Old Kent Road and |

Peckham

| | |
|---|--|
| Location of non-shielded residents seeking support | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For non-shielded referrals to the hub, the wards with the largest number of referrals were Nunhead and Queens Road, Newington and Old Kent Road. |
| Reasons for referrals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key reasons for referrals include: vulnerability due to COVID-19 (age/health conditions), short-term lack of funds, loss of work and financial hardship and long-term food insecurity. |

Case studies

The review group heard from a number of organisations who had played a crucial role in supporting vulnerable people impacted by Covid-19. The case studies are examples of different kinds of organisations and individuals and provide key learning points for the future from their perspectives and experiences.

Residents

Mina called the Southwark Council Covid Support line after her doctor told her to self-isolate for 12 weeks due to asthma and other health problems. She was also short of credit for a prepayment meter due to increased energy use by being at home 24 hours a day. The Hub was able to offer support via the Council's Emergency Support scheme for help with fuel bills, while referring her to Pembroke House for support with food delivery to get her through the period of lockdown. During a check-in call from Pembroke House it was apparent that isolation was impacting mental health, and she was supported to access Talking Therapies Southwark.

Tom is a sufferer of COPD and other long term conditions, including depression, but had not received a letter from the Government. Previously a sociable regular at Pembroke House lunch club, Tom was now socially isolated, extremely anxious about going out, and a lack of food at home was becoming a serious problem. At the start of the Covid-19 crisis Villa St GP surgery reached out to Pembroke House about some of the patients they had concerns about. Pembroke House called these patients, one of whom was Tom. Pembroke House arranged for a regular food bag delivery and once the certainty of this service was established, Tom also felt able to sign up for a befriending service.

Lucas' GP referred him to the Social Prescribing Link Worker, as his chronic depression and anxiety meant he was finding lockdown particularly difficult. Due to his mental health needs, Lucas was finding it difficult to engage with services and was having trouble with his benefits. The Link Worker referred him to the Southwark Wellbeing Hub to connect him with a support worker that could help him with his low mood and provide benefits advice. The Link Worker also applied for the Southwark Hardship Fund on his behalf, from which he received £208 for food and bills; and organised weekly food parcels to be delivered via the community settlement, Pembroke House.

Lucas appreciated this effort and was inspired to re-apply for his benefits and engage with a telephone counselling service that he had previously been too nervous to use.

Lucas is now engaged with a support worker, who offers three months of support and weekly calls; together they are working to access new accommodation for him, which would enable Lucas to have his daughter to stay with him at weekends. The Link Worker is continuing to work with Lucas to support him through positive changes he wants to make to his life.

'Thanks for all your efforts – I have been struggling to find the right help for Lucas at this time, so am really pleased to have found you. Thank you so much!'

Nunhead Knocks Mutual-Aid Group

Nunhead Knocks started as a small group of people who live in Nunhead and Peckham that care about looking after their community. As they watched the Covid-19 crisis spread across Europe, they soon realised they'd need to respond quickly to support their little pocket of London - so they created Nunhead Knocks.

Within 24 hours, a small core team of volunteers had assembled to try and build a system to match all the offers of help we were getting to those who needed it. They quickly built a website and within a few days were getting logistics sorted and had recruited dozens of volunteers to help.

Within a week they had delivered leaflets to over 11,000 homes in their area and had over 1,100 volunteers ready to help. They had already matched 32 requests with people who could help them.

Nunhead Knocks has the support of local businesses, Mutual Aid groups, experts, charities and tenants groups who they are working with to support their neighbours safely and securely. They now have experts to refer people with specialist needs to as well as in areas such as food hygiene, safe delivery of services, pet care and finance.

Nunhead Knocks are now sharing their system with other neighbourhoods across London and the country because it works, they can match people needing help with those who can give it, hyper-locally, often in their own street, they want to make sure no one is left alone to face this, even in isolation.

The group is now looking to become more formally established and more democratic and representative of the people they serve.

As the pandemic developed and in the first few weeks the group were overwhelmed by the numbers of volunteers coming forward to help - in the end around 1,800 people volunteered. In the first few weeks prior to the central government food deliveries coming on stream the group started to deliver food parcels (and cooked meals) in small numbers to their neighbours in need of support.

It took some time for the group to become more organised and develop appropriate systems for how they worked. For example, they broke their area down into 29 zones which meant their volunteers did not have to travel too far from home to provide support.

The group learned as things developed including from the things they did that did not go well as well as those that did. In the early days they started to provide cooked meals and had capacity to do 100 of these per week but this took a lot of time to get up to speed. Initially they also accepted donations of things like mattresses and fridges but these were difficult to handle and less needed.

One thing the group noted was that some of those being supported were reluctant to come forward and even less likely to approach what they saw as the authorities.

The relationship with the local authority was crucial in supporting the group – a small grant supported their work for 10 weeks and they were enormously grateful for this support.

Access to and use of the Green Community Centre in Nunhead was also essential to the group being able to function as successfully as they did.

The group are keen to get back to signposting and wider advice and support than food and are keen that they are provided with support in doing this to address the underlying local challenges.

In terms of who the group was supporting this changed over time initially it was those who could not or were too worried to leave home, this shifted towards more people who were in economic hardship because of a Covid-related loss of employment. They also noticed the large numbers of people who were isolated with no other support networks (particularly around the Old Kent Road area) including many people who did not have English as a first language and appeared to have immigration concerns.

Their outreach programme when it started worked really well and allowed them to build bridges and trust with those reluctant to come forward – for example they established good relationships with the local faith organisations which helped in reaching out.

The group recently held a Town hall meeting to start planning for what next. This had a large number of volunteers present to give their feedback and the Steering Group are currently working through this – they are keen to continue working in the community and to retain the relationship with the council, Community Southwark and the Green Community Centre including to build relationships with other groups. They now work very closely with others including the SE15 groups – one of their committee members chairs a weekly coming together of groups in SE15.

The two things that the council provided that were invaluable were the small grant and the food deliveries to them.

Flashy Wings Ministry

Flashy Wings Ministry was founded by Queen Enefola Ekuerhare in 2009. It is a small faith based organisation and a non-denominational charity, built on Christian values, that serves people from all walks of life. Its purpose and focus is to motivate, educate, and inspire women of all backgrounds. It provides a wide range of resources, advice and support to women in dealing with issues they face including health, finances, parenting and domestic abuse. Much of its work was done face to face including through workshops and conferences. Its purpose is to bring women together to share their experience and to inspire and motivate them to face the challenges they are dealing with.

When the pandemic hit Flashy Wings Ministry was unable to provide its services in the normal way. The staff saw a significant number of women starting to be affected by the impact of Covid-19 and so decided to switch to providing support including with food in dealing with these issues. With the help of a small grant from United St Saviours Flashy Wings was able to start delivering food to women who were impacted. This quickly grew to support for over 1,800 women in desperate need. Without the help from United St Saviours this would not have been possible.

Flashy Wings did a survey to collect information on some of the women they were supporting and over 80 of these responded. The survey showed that:

- 99% of women supported were from BAME backgrounds
- 30% reported having no recourse to public funds
- 20% reported a Covid-19 related change in financial circumstances.

- 10% reported low income
- 3% had special dietary needs in some cases due to medical conditions
- 8% needed packed ready meals mainly older people
- 15% needed baby food and other baby essentials
- 12% needed hygiene items
- 2% reported hardship caused by delayed payments of Universal Credit

Flashy Wings approach is different to some foodbanks in that they:

- take into account individual dietary requirements
- provide packed ready meals for older people
- provide packages of food tailor made to individual need
- provide baby food and baby essentials
- provide adult essentials and hygiene items.

They noticed that many of the people they were supporting reported being afraid of using statutory services or even foodbanks because of their immigration status.

The work highlighted a number of underlying challenges that must be addressed in future:

- An upsurge in Mental Health Issues
- A rise in Domestic Violence
- Long term deprivation resulting from the impacts of the pandemic

Flashy Wings now plan to re-introduce digital and face to face sessions when they can do safely to provide education and awareness raising and to empower women from BAME communities. They plan to organize:

- Parenting Classes
- A Domestic Violence Awareness Programme
- Mental Health Awareness Classes
- Financial Education Classes

Flashy Wings Ministry believe the pandemic has left a lot of vulnerable women confused, uncertain about the future and has wreaked financial havoc. Despite this they remain optimistic that with support and care for each other we can overcome.

Social Prescribing

Early on in the COVID-19 response, the CCG, Primary Care Networks (PCN) and Clinical Effectiveness Southwark developed a proactive care pathway and template for general practice to support remote (telephone and/or video) contacts with shielded/vulnerable patients to optimise the management of their underlying conditions, tailor information giving, and support advanced care planning where appropriate.

Any identified social needs are referred or signposted on to the PCN social prescribing link workers, the community hub, GoodSAM or other sources of support.

The GP federations and the CCG have worked with the council to agree scripts concerning medicines delivery for the council's outbound calls to the shielded and for case managers receiving inbound calls at the council's community hub. If there are any difficulties with this, the hub can refer the patient to the Federations for support from the social prescribing link worker to liaise with their GP and pharmacy to resolve the issue.

The GP federations and the Southwark Medicines Optimisation team worked with the London Fire Brigade to agree a process to ensure delivery of medicines to those with cognitive impairment as GoodSAM does not take referrals for anyone with a cognitive impairment.

In relation to social prescribing, PCNs are expanding the social prescriber team to meet demand from our communities, supporting the development of peer networks, continuing to develop and maintain a directory of services, and considering how they can further align pathways with the Community Hub, Older People's Hub and Healthy Lifestyle Hub.

Work is also underway, which is being led by Clinical Effectiveness Southwark, to further develop a proactive approach in primary care and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on people with long-term conditions.

As of 1 July, circa 7,000 patients had been reviewed by primary care using the proactive care pathway and template. Of these patients, 1,171 identified as having an informal/formal carer, and 423 identified as housebound.

Any identified social needs are referred or signposted on to a PCN social prescribing link workers, the community hub, GoodSAM or other support. 363 people were referred from the proactive review to a VCS service with their consent.

140 people have been referred to the PCN social prescribers in the north and south of the borough. The first telephone appointment with a link worker is on average within 14 hours of the referral.

PCN social prescribers have identified a range of different needs – mostly social support (44%), food delivery (21%) and mental health (21%). And have referred to over 30 different services/organisations for ongoing support.

There has been a shift in focus from prevention to supporting people in crisis, as social prescribers have found this to be a more complex cohort than envisaged. Social prescribers have provided practical and emotional support incl. welfare calls, mental health support, bereavement, anxiety, social isolation and loneliness, those in financial crisis and those with addictions.

Central Southwark Community Hub

The team at Central Southwark Community Hub had been managing a Foodbank for seven years and been involved in other community projects at various levels. During this time have noticed how the people who rely on them are, more often than not, in need through no fault of their own and are merely victims of circumstance.

Their newest venture was to open a community hub, including a food bank, that will give people in need a place to visit that will help them receive some basic care provisions and give them the means to improve their own situations.

Over the last seven years, they gained a wealth of experience by speaking to service users and familiarising themselves with their different situations. This allowed them to develop strategies to best help vulnerable people, experiencing food poverty and address the underlying causes of their situations.

They also ran a Holiday Club which provided Holiday learning, food and play for families who need it most.

When the pandemic hit the focus of their services shifted from addressing wider needs to supporting the food needs of people impacted by covid. Their food parcels provide a week's worth of groceries and toiletries for each person in a given household.

From March to July they noticed the number of clients increasing exponentially from 72 households in March to 566 in April and 1035 in May with the numbers then slowly decreasing to 594 in July.

The majority of the people they support are from the South American community in Southwark, predominantly the Walworth Road area. More than half of these clients from this community qualify as NRPF (no recourse to public funds), whilst over 60% live in, often cramped, privately rented accommodation. Throughout the pandemic they have received stories from some of these clients complaining of the poor, cramped conditions in which they live. Some have even warned of having a curfew and allotted times to use the toilet, kitchen and turn off the lights. More than 60% of their South American clientele were living in privately rented accommodation, and a considerable proportion of them do not wish to fill out forms (some said through fear of being located by authorities/ the home office).

Prior to the pandemic, their largest client group came from the Black African communities in Southwark, who now make up the second largest client group. In comparison to South American communities, these households are more often families with children. A large proportion of this group are also NRPF - just under 20%. They are convinced that all of the data collected in regards to ethnicity further supports the data we see in wider society which all highlights food insecurity as a race issue.

They believe that in order to tackle food insecurity in Southwark and beyond, we must first tackle racial inequality. In London, 1 in 3 food vouchers are given to those of black ethnic heritage despite the fact those of black ethnic heritage make up only 13.3. % of the population. Across the UK statistical analysis has shown that minority ethnic groups are more likely to face food security challenges than their white British counterparts (Trussell Trust).

Over the course of the pandemic they have seen a significant rise in the number of clients living in emergency accommodation. Though on the surface this may seem negative, they assume it is actually as a result of the 'rapid rehousing' of the homeless during the pandemic

which has resulted in them being ‘on the map’ again and thus around to receive further support and advice.

The significant proportion of clientele using privately rented accommodation (>35%) is as a result of the large population of NRPF clients. Despite this, public/social housing is still the most common accommodation.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the majority of their clientele have been unemployed (>72%). At the start of the pandemic, many of their clients with NRPF were let go from their jobs (more often in the informal sector) and given no furlough or redundancy.

The number of NRPF clientele at Central Southwark Community Hub also explains the great disparity between ‘Contractor Part Time Employed’ and ‘Part Time Employed’. In this way, they have witnessed many NRPF clients on zero-hour contracts, working in the informal sector as a way of getting around the lack of opportunity they experience as NRPF.

Data has also been collected on where the referrals have come from, in order to assess relationships with other hubs and organisations. This chart depicts the referral organisation that signposted the client household to Central Southwark Community Hub. The largest proportion have been referred to us by the Glory of Shaddai Church. The Glory of Shaddai Church is a predominantly Latin American Christian Church. Other notable organisations include SPC (Southwark Pensioners Centre) and Southwark’s Social Care Team.

Prior to the lockdown, clients seen by Central Southwark Community hub were largely families with No Recourse to Public Funds. Now, this group has increased whilst other groups (such as those claiming benefit, homeless or isolating) are also increasing. Notably, there has been a large number of clients who have used the foodbank due to a delay in their Universal Credit payment, which they applied for after losing income.

In most cases, there are multiple reasons for referral. The data collected has enabled the identification of those who receive a disability benefit (2.5% of clients). In 6.1% of cases people are self-isolating due to ‘underlying health conditions’ and unable to access food. Central Southwark Community Hub is helping those in these difficult situations, however the number of these referrals has massively decreased since they can now be signposted to food deliveries from private institutions. 58 people with NRPF (No recourse to public funds) have so far been referred, however they assume this figure is in fact a lot larger since a lot of the Latin American community from the Glory of Shaddai Church, when referred, were not given reasons for referral. They are currently working with translators to highlight their problems, in order to support them further.

Walworth Community Food Hub

The Walworth Community Food Hub is run by Pembroke House, a centre for social action and residential settlement that is based just off the Old Kent Road.

In normal times Pembroke House delivers and supports 30 projects for local people, providing opportunities for residents to connect with each other and with other activities and services; try new things, learn and grow; and give back and contribute to their community. Although Pembroke House ran some food projects before Covid-19 – such as a weekly lunch club and a community café, both of which used surplus food from the charity City Harvest – they hadn’t operated a large-scale food distribution project before. When lockdown was imposed, Pembroke House’s first priority was to speak to regular participants to find out what support they might need during the crisis, as well as to other

organisations and agencies working in the neighbourhood. Access to food was by far the biggest concern.

In response, they established a new food distribution operation that was up-and-running just days after lockdown began.

For six days each week, food from a variety of sources arrives at the Hub. Some has been donated by Southwark Council and much comes from FareShare, the surplus food redistribution charity.

The food is sorted by volunteers and divided into 8kg packages, containing a range of items: fresh, chilled or frozen ingredients, ready-to-eat meals, and cupboard goods. The packages are then delivered by volunteer cycle couriers to people in need.

Since the start of lockdown, more than 100 tonnes of food have been delivered to thousands of local households in over 10,000 individual food packages.

The Hub began operating at the end of March, delivering 1.5 tonnes of food to just over 300 households. At its peak in late June/early July, in a single week the Hub delivered over seven tonnes to more than 600 local households.

While some people's circumstances have improved as lockdown has eased, there are still over 400 households registered for deliveries, meaning that over a thousand local people still rely on the Hub to feed themselves and their families.

The Hub was set up to serve the community in Walworth (SE17) and surrounding neighbourhoods (parts of SE1, SE5, SE11, SE15 and SE16). Its defined area of benefit is currently households within a one-mile radius of Pembroke House itself (SE17 1QR).

The Walworth Community Food Hub now receives referrals from over 30 partner organisations, including a school, a nursery, local charities, a GP surgery, a mutual aid group, and the council's Covid-19 Hub.

The Hub prioritises regular deliveries to people who are self-isolating due to Covid-19 symptoms, suffering a sudden short-term lack of funds due to the crisis, or experiencing significant extra pressure as carers.

Priority is also given to those who do not have other means of support such as friends, family or neighbours, access to online shopping, or access to food banks.

The Walworth Community Food Hub has been designed to provide an opportunity for local residents to support one another whilst protecting the personal data of the most vulnerable individuals. Food package recipients receive communications from the Hub (e.g. about their next scheduled delivery) via text message, using a system operated by Pembroke House staff. Volunteers and recipients never receive one another's contact details and volunteers adhere to strict hygiene and social distancing protocols – both at the Hub and while making deliveries in the neighbourhood.

Originally based at Pembroke House's building on Tatum Street, the Hub has now moved to the Walworth Living Room on Surrey Square – a new community space, led by the Pembroke House team, that opened its doors in 2019.

While continuing to support the hundreds of people who still rely on the Walworth Community Food Hub, Pembroke House is beginning to consider how to develop a longer-

term project that works to tackle not just the symptoms but the root causes of food insecurity in Walworth.

This will build on local skills and resources, allowing participants to contribute as well as benefit. Creating and sharing food will be a focal point, bringing people together and providing an access route to other services and support.

The project's format will be determined over the coming months, in partnership with local people and organisations. However, it will centre on the Walworth Living Room, and could include a donations-based café, partnerships with local growing projects, a community pantry, resident-led cookery workshops, and access to debt-advice and other services.

The Review Group

It is clear that a huge amount has been achieved in a quick space of time to support those most vulnerable through the Covid-19 crisis, but the work of the Community Hub has not always been an easy task. Partners have agreed that the work of the hub has been a success and there is much to build on to leave a long lasting legacy for the future. It is clear, that through both the successes and the challenges of the Community Hub a huge amount has been learned along the way.

This rapid review group was established in order to hear evidence from partners from across sectors on the response to date and views on priorities for the future of the Community Hub. Through the process of the review we have also sought to capture the lessons of the partnership-working to date.

The review has been led by a cross sector review group, including the following council, VCS and health representatives:

- Cllr Kieron Williams (Chair)
- Cllr Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health
- Cathy Deplessis, Director, Southwark Pensioners Centre
- Chris Mikata-Pralat, Chief Executive Officer, Community Southwark
- Hayley Ormandy, Programme Director Partnership Southwark
- Mike Wilson, Executive Director, Pembroke House

The review group undertook an extensive programme of engagement and considered evidence from a wide range of sources including:

- The 8 local community food hubs that formed part of the Community Hub.
- Funders like United St Saviours who had supported the response.
- Services dealing with people needing hardship support and accessing the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme.
- Mutual-aid groups who mobilised thousands of volunteers alongside faith groups and other grassroots community groups like Tenants & Residents Associations.
- The Forum for Equalities and Human Rights in Southwark.
- Adult Social Care Providers.
- Health and Social Prescribing workers.

- Public Health officers.
- Voluntary & Community Sector organisations across the borough who engaged in a wide-ranging series of events organised and facilitated by Community Southwark.

The review also has also draw on a range of research into the impacts of the pandemic in Southwark and on the work of the Community Hub itself, including:

- Survey of a representative sample of people supported by the current Hub arrangements.
- Survey of a representative sample of Southwark's population
- Survey of voluntary and community organisations
- Analysis of people served by the current Community Hub arrangements,
- Rapid needs assessment to understand the health and wellbeing impact of the pandemic

A number of key findings have emerged through this evidence concerning the challenges and opportunities facing the borough that have helped to frame the recommendations on the development of the community hub below.

As well as tackling *what* we should do as partners next, throughout the evidence it has also been clear that there is a lot to learn from *how* partners have worked together through the current crisis. In many ways these are some of the most striking reflections from the review process and, taken together, these lessons can usefully form principles to underpin our collective approach as we develop the recommendations below.

Key Findings

Wide-ranging vulnerabilities

While many residents within the borough may have been able to alter working and lifestyle patterns to adapt to the changes brought about due to lockdown, the pandemic has shone a light on a significant number of residents who find themselves in precarious positions and for whom lockdown has brought major challenges, even leading to crisis.

Although many of these residents are known to agencies, a significant proportion of those who have accessed support through the Covid-19 crisis are in vulnerable situations but nevertheless fall below the radar of traditional services, including those with no recourse to public funds.

Evidence provided to the review group suggests at least three categories of resident requiring support through the Community Hub and other local offers:

- Residents already known to agencies or services – including those on government shielded lists, existing social care and housing support lists, those already in contact with VCS organisations, and residents *registered* as having no recourse to public funds.
- Residents with vulnerabilities that lie under the radar – those without recourse to public funds and not registered as such, undocumented migrants and those beneath thresholds or out of touch with formal support services.
- Residents on the cusp of coping – residents thrown into crisis through the early impacts of lockdown, through the loss of insecure employment, for example, or the struggles with health, debt or housing.

Through the activities of the community hub we have built a far more detailed picture of the challenges faced by residents across the borough than we have had previously. Brought about through sharing of information between agencies in order to ensure that those in urgent need of support receive it swiftly, and through the incoming requests for support via the Covid-19 helpline, this picture has informed the activity to date and gives shape to the recommendations set out in this report.

Now that a clear light has been shone on the challenges facing these residents, and support services have been mobilised to offer practical support during the pandemic, it is critical that attention does not simply shift away and these offers disappear as the immediate crisis recedes. Many of these residents will require longer-term support, including complex case management, while others in less critical situations may be prevented from getting into further difficulties if given the appropriate opportunities at this stage.

Inequalities in Impact

In Southwark as elsewhere in the country the review group heard evidence of the significant disproportionate negative impacts of Covid-19. Analysis undertaken by Public Health England and the Office for National Statistics has shown the following:

| Characteristic | Impact |
|----------------------|--|
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age is the largest driver of disparity, with the majority of those dying from COVID-19 being aged over 65 years, with almost half aged over 85. Mortality among working age men is more than twice that of their female counterparts. |
| Ethnicity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significantly higher mortality rates have been found among certain ethnic groups. Those of black and Asian ethnic backgrounds have been shown to have mortality rates almost twice those of white backgrounds. |
| Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of those dying from COVID-19 have had multiple underlying health conditions, including diabetes, hypertension, COPD and dementia. Several studies, also report an increased risk of adverse outcomes in obese or morbidly obese people. |
| Deprivation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who live in deprived areas have higher diagnosis rates and death rates than those living in less deprived areas. The mortality rates from COVID -19 in the most deprived areas are more than double the least deprived areas. |
| Urban areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authorities with the highest diagnoses and death rates are mostly urban. Death rates in London from COVID -19 are more than three times higher than in the South West of England. |
| Occupation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those in public facing roles such as care workers, security guards, and transport workers have higher COVID -19 mortality. For many occupations, the number of deaths is too small to draw meaningful conclusions. |
| Care Homes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHE analysis indicates there were 2.3 times the number of deaths in care homes than expected between 20 March and 7 May when compared to previous years. |
| Other factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When compared to previous years, there has been a larger increase in deaths among people born outside the UK. Higher diagnosis and mortality rates are also expected among rough sleepers and those with no fixed abode. |

Research in 2020 from the Food Foundation shows that characteristics associated with higher risk of economic food insecurity in the UK normally are also associated with risk of any food insecurity at this time and economic food insecurity in particular, since the COVID-19 lockdown. These include:

- Adults with life-limiting health conditions and disabilities,
- Adults with children in their household.
- Adults who are unemployed.

- Adults from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups.

The research demonstrates that these are all groups at higher risk of poverty in the UK. Importantly, these socio-economic groups are also at higher risk of food insecurity arising for other reasons.

People who are unemployed are also at higher risk of experiencing food insecurity arising from isolation. Adults with children and adults with disabilities are also at higher risk of food insecurity arising from both a lack of food in shops and isolation.

These findings suggest that COVID-19 conditions have exacerbated food insecurity for households already vulnerable to food insecurity and chime with news reports of people with disabilities and with children being unable to secure grocery deliveries and also being unable to access lower-cost brands, which are essential for people on limited incomes.

In Southwark a survey of residents revealed the following regarding people's own view on negative impacts:

| Characteristic | Impact |
|----------------|--|
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65+ years have lower proportion reporting negative impact on mental health (than <=54 years), physical health (than 35-54 yr olds), finances and employment (than all ages). Caution should be used in interpreting the data as older people can be less likely to access online data. • The severity of this negative impact was also lower, with fewer 65+ year olds reporting a large negative impact on physical health (than 35-44 yr olds), mental health, finances, employment (than all ages) • There was no overall difference in the proportion reporting a negative impact on workload and social activities by age, but a lower proportion of 65+ year olds reported a large negative impact (than all ages). |
| Sex | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher proportion of women reported a negative impact on their mental health. |
| Ethnicity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher proportion of ethnic minority respondent reported a negative impact on their physical health, finances, employment and workload than white respondents. • For finances and workload, the severity was also worse, with a higher proportion reporting a large negative impact on these factors. • A similar proportion reported an overall negative impact on their mental health and family life but a higher proportion of respondents from an ethnic minority reported a large negative impact on these factors. • A lower proportion of ethnic minority respondents reported |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| | a negative impact on their social activities. |
| Disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher proportion of disabled respondents reported a negative impact on their mental health, physical health, physical fitness than non-disabled respondents. • A similar proportion reported an overall negative impact on their family life but a higher proportion of disabled respondents reported a large negative impact on this factor. • A lower proportion reported a negative impact on their social activities. |
| Sexuality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lower proportion reported a positive impact on their family life than heterosexual respondents |

Parents and Carers also reported greater negative impacts than those without children or caring responsibilities and greater negative impacts were reported by respondents who have had changes to their salary.

Food as an entry-point, not an endpoint

In many ways, food insecurity was the face of the first phase of the crisis, as early panic buying and new shielding arrangements made access to food and essential goods a predominant concern for many residents. In the initial phase this was provided to all who requested it rather than means tested.

A wide range of food offers sprung up quickly in response, including among Community Hub partners, local businesses, tenants and residents' associations, faith organisations and mutual aid groups. These offers have often focussed on the provision of emergency food parcels, with various doorstep delivery models supplementing what is otherwise a stripped-back food bank model with fewer opportunities to access wider support services and less choice.

However, evidence presented to the review group has made it clear that the pandemic has revealed, rather than caused a food insecurity crisis. According to the Southwark Food Alliance Action Plan London's first ever measure of food insecurity, which took place between 2018 and 2019, found that almost 1 in 4 Southwark residents over age 16 are likely to be food insecure. This was updated after the Survey of Londoners to estimate 75,000 local residents who may be skipping meals due to lack of funds or facing real hunger.

COVID-19 has revealed the issues of Britain's national social security system. Unfortunately, we have limited access to local data on people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF in Southwark as this is held centrally by the Home Office). However, a number of local community food providers reported that a large number of the people they have been supporting do not have recourse to public funds. This includes a significant number of people who are long term residents in the UK who despite the fact they have been legally working and paying taxes here, in some cases for many years, are not eligible to claim benefits so have had no social security net to fall back on during this national crisis.

The majority of families supported by the council's NRPF Service are single-parent households headed by women.

Presentations to the group, including from the established local food banks, have advocated strongly for a move beyond the simple provision of food parcels in order to tackle the root causes of the food insecurity. In Southwark, before Covid-19, 23.5% of residents were food insecure, translating to 75,000 individuals. The message has been clear: the issue at stake is not simply food poverty, but poverty itself and its drivers.

In order to tackle the reasons why residents have been struck by food insecurity – either over long-term or as a short-term impact of lockdown – a more holistic offer is required, where food can be the entry point to wider support with issues including debt, employment and housing.

Impact on Foodbanks and Local Hubs

There has been a four-fold increase in the number of referrals to food banks since lockdown due to financial insecurity.

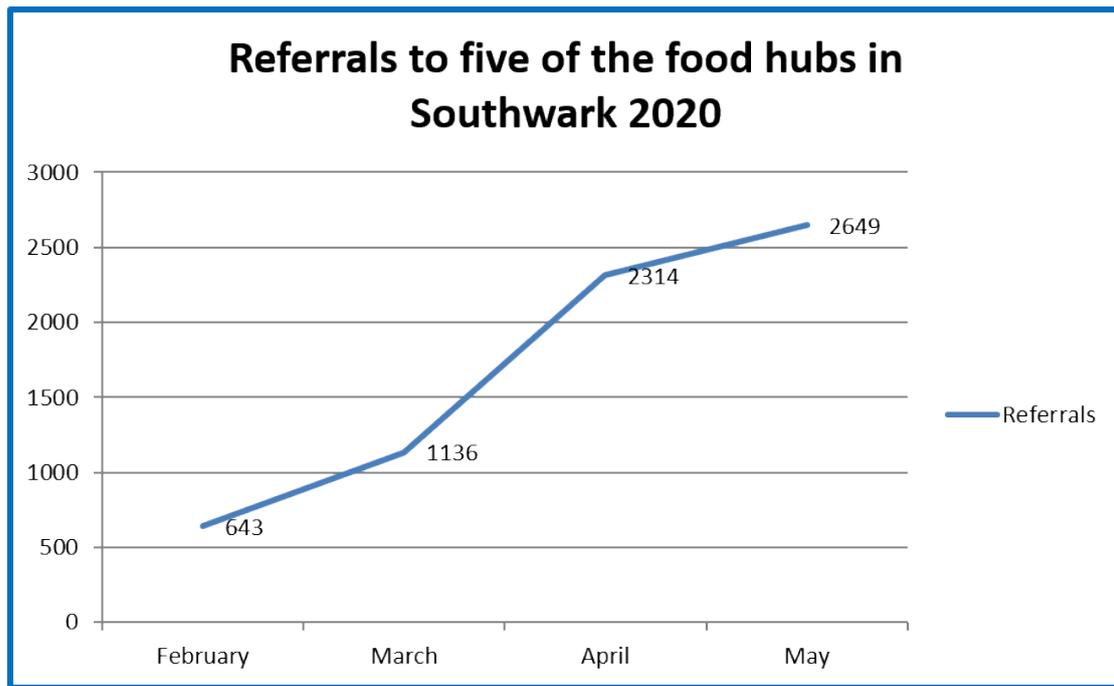
As noted above there are eight food distribution hubs in the borough that are receiving referrals directly from the Community Hub to support the non-shielding vulnerable residents. In addition to the eight hubs, there are a large number of VCS, faith groups and TRAs and Mutual-Aid groups that are supporting residents with access to food, some of which are starting to coordinate some of their food sourcing/sharing.

Food hubs are reporting an increase in referrals for families with children and larger households, further increasing the pressure for the hubs.

Most hubs were supporting food access prior to Covid-19. Three were established foodbanks able to demonstrate increase in demand:

- Pecan, Southwark food bank, had a 394% year on year increase from 23rd March to 9th April.
- St George the Martyr's food bank said 78% of clients are food insecure due to economic factors, and 22% because of shielding /isolating.
- Central Southwark Community hub have had an additional 142 families referred since the start of the pandemic lockdown.

The data in the graph below was for five of the larger food hubs in the borough, the Albrighton Community Fridge, Pembroke House, Central Southwark Community Hubs, St George the Martyrs, Pecan. At this time over 6,700 new referrals had been supported by the five hubs since lockdown.



Over the first three months of lockdown the Community Hub and VCS had distributed over 144,000kg of surplus food from Fare Share. FareShare London redistribute surplus food to a number of charities and organisations in Southwark and across the capital. FareShare, the Felix Project and City Harvest have formed the London Food Alliance to ensure a more coordinated response to COVID-19.

This 144,000kg of food equates to:

- 343,864 meals.
- A retail value of £432,000.
- A saving of 547.2 tonnes of carbon dioxide being produced if this food had become waste.

In the first three months of lockdown Pembroke House had carried out the following:

- 170 hours of online community activities.
- 9,252 deliveries of food bags to households in need.
- Volunteers had cycled 27,607 kilometres to respond to the need.

A national system that does not provide the social security many need

Prior to the pandemic foodbanks were already experiencing hugely increased demand and families being pushed into poverty and falling through the safety net of the social security system. The pandemic has shone a light on the scale of the numbers of people on the cusp

of debt, poverty and not being able to eat. The evidence is overwhelming and stark revealing the precarious nature of the welfare system.

Workers whose income has been hit by the Covid-19 crisis have sought to rely on the system, and in many cases found it has not provided the support they desperately needed.

This has included:

- From mid-March to mid-April 9,000 Universal Credit claims were made in Southwark, compared to Pre-Covid-19.
- The monthly average was 1,500 claims a month.
- The Department of Work & Pensions said that the number of people on universal credit had increased by 40% as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Universal credit is paid in arrears so four weeks of earnings are assessed, plus a further week to process the payment.

Claimants seeking financial support since the start of the pandemic are finding the basic rate of universal credit inadequate to meet their needs and cover their bills. New universal credit claimants must wait five weeks for their first payment. Therefore, the system fails to support people when they are at their most vulnerable, and adds to the fragility of their finances. Advance loans are available, but these must be paid back out of future meagre benefit payments. People who have been reluctant to claim cite the fear of falling into debt.

The Council's NRPF Service receives approximately 50 referrals per month. Within the NRPF system, 75% of cases are unable to lawfully work. The remainder are lawfully able to work, but have been deemed unable to meet their needs or those of their families. Most commonly they are not working or working a few hours in low paid roles.

In addition to this we know that 40-50 asylum seekers are living in the borough and that around 1,600 people in Southwark are awaiting the outcome of an asylum application. From the evidence presented to the group it is clear that there are many more residents who are facing hardship but are not documented or fall under the radar of the official statistics.

A wealth of local support services, but fragmented

The review group has heard evidence from a wide range of groups and organisations that have offered support through the crisis, from core council services, population-specific support hubs (including the new older people's service in partnership with the voluntary sector), neighbourhood food hubs, new social prescribing link worker teams, established VCS groups, tenants and residents associations, mutual aid and faith groups.

Through this evidence it is clear that there is a wide range of support available to local residents within Southwark, at the borough-level, within local neighbourhoods and for those with population-specific needs. After a decade of national austerity levels of support are certainly not what they once were and many services are stretched, but collectively partners in Southwark have continued to find ways to provide a wide range for support.

However, it is also clear that this remains a fragmented landscape such that it is often not easy for residents to find their way to the support that is best for them.

Healthwatch Southwark's recent survey report on experiences of health and social care during COVID-19¹ found that it was rated hardest to find clear information about changes to health services that people might access or need to access during the pandemic, followed by information on looking after their mental or physical health.

Through the work of the community hub significant steps have been taken to coordinate activity that is relevant to the emergency response. The borough wide front door of the Covid-19 line has offered clarity for residents and partners in terms of entry point, while taking the burden of triage and assessment off the immediate front line of VCS and other support services. Similarly, the new referral arrangements between the Council and VCS and with the health providers have provided new routes to share information quickly and effectively.

This clearly has not solved all challenges with the wider service landscape. It is clear, for example, that the terminology of 'hub' is overused: currently employed to designate the activity under review in this report, *as well as* physical neighbourhood 'community hubs' and population specific hubs including the recently commissioned older people's hub (soon to change name to Ageing Well in Southwark) and the ongoing mental health and wellbeing hub. This overlapping terminology is unhelpful for service providers and users alike.

Evidence presented to the review has also made it clear that while there are good links between the formal VCS, council and health partners – links that have been further strengthened through working together on the community hub – more could be done to build incorporate and support grassroots activities and groups (see below).

As the economic pressures on the horizon begin to bite it will be critical that as partners we are able to leverage and coordinate *existing* activities effectively in the manner that we have seen at a small scale through the Community Hub process. Perfect service integration is perhaps an unrealistic aspiration but a clear framework to be used to assess the contribution of new initiatives to agreed outcomes is more easily achieved. Such a framework for the borough could help hold service providers and commissioners clearly to common goals. This needs to take on board that it may put off people who don't want to come to the attention of the authorities or don't want to share their needs despite desperately needing help but are very happy to approach the VCS or mutual aid groups.

Both/and: the centre and the neighbourhood

While the focus of the borough wide-front-door and data-sharing arrangements have been at borough-level, the practical support to residents has often been channelled through the neighbourhoods in which people live. Eight neighbourhood food hubs were established quickly through the connections of the Southwark Food Action Alliance, local mutual aid groups swiftly filtered down to the neighbourhood- (and often street- level), and social prescribing link workers work through existing primary care networks and neighbourhood arrangements. A key principle has been 'no wrong door' but it is important to ensure that this does not lead to 'pinball signposting' and that one organisation 'holds people' that make an enquiry until they get to the right place for advice or support.

¹ <https://www.healthwatchsouthwark.org/report/2020-07-13/experiences-health-and-social-care-southwark-during-covid-19-pandemic>

This provides an opportunity for a longer-term legacy that sees Southwark's neighbourhoods as the effective unit of delivery. Through the Community Hub the traditional either/or of public service design, between centralising and devolving activity, has been turned into a both/and: effective neighbourhood support has been enabled by clear coordination at the centre and the centre has relied on the neighbourhood for local delivery. This has been a mutually beneficial relationship because the centre has listened to the neighbourhoods and changed its approach too

The neighbourhood food hubs, for example, have been aided by central procurement and logistics support, and the burden of triage and assessment of individual VCS organisations has been eased by the single central Covid emergency line. At the same time, the central response has relied on the adaptability of neighbourhood organisations to respond to differing, or changing, local needs and to provide real-time intelligence on emerging trends.

Rather than the either/or of centralising and devolving activity, therefore, the challenge is to identify the correct tiers for different activities and to strengthen the relationships between them. As above, this will require a clear framework for future service design that includes the views of those on the ground.

Supporting the upsurge in community spirit

A clear feature of the past 5 months has been the groundswell of residents stepping forward to offer time and resources to help in their local communities and the wider borough. The review group has heard evidence from local mutual aid groups that grew in the case of Nunhead Knocks to 1,800 members from a standing start. It heard from church groups that have provided a large number of meals to local residents, organisations like Flashy Wings Ministry that provide support to 1,500 women. It also took evidence from VCS organisations that have been inundated with volunteers. In the case of Pembroke House this was over 200 new volunteers in 24hrs to support food deliveries.

It is also important to note that the activity reviewed here does not paint a full picture of support that has been offered within the borough during lockdown but instead only that which has been filtered through the Covid-19 helpline, NHS bodies, VCS partners, the funders including the council who supported a wide range of community activity and those mutual aid and faith group organisations who have offered evidence to the group. A great many other residents have been helped, or offered help, through informal networks and local groups.

While much of this has proceeded without the need for any further external support a number of themes have emerged in evidence given to the group, including the request for clear communication lines into decision makers within the council, stronger interfaces with local neighbourhood organisations and support with funding, premises and policy support.

It is critical to the longer-term health of the borough that the community spirit that has emerged through Covid-19 is supported to flourish most effectively over the longer-term.

Engagement with VCS organisations

Between 22nd June 2020 and 8th July 2020 Community Southwark organised an extensive series of engagement meetings and surveys with VCS organisations in Southwark this included the following:

- 2 BAME Network meetings

- Children, Young People and Families Network meeting
- Creative Network meeting
- Learning Disabilities Network meeting
- Mental Health Network meeting
- Older People Network meeting
- Physical and Sensory Disability Network meeting
- Small Groups Network meeting
- Southwark Community Action Network meeting (for MAGs and TRAs)
- Sport and Physical Activity Network meeting
- Southwark Food Action Alliance meeting
- Universal Credit Network meeting
- Volunteer Managers' Network meeting

Community Southwark organised a meeting with the local neighbourhood hub representatives on 1st July 2020 and a Southwark Voice meeting with their network chairs on 7th July 2020.

Community Southwark also started a monthly State of the Sector survey from July 2020 to understand better how the local VCS has been affected and any impact on the Community Hub.²

Community Southwark also ran a survey with their members relating specifically to the Community Hub asking if any of them want to submit evidence in person at the Review Group³. By 17th July 2020 there were just under 50 responses.⁴

Community Southwark had a dedicated space within their website where any documents on the future of the Community Hub were shared.⁵

The feedback from VCS organisations was that:

- Some VCS groups are concerned that it may be left to them to provide the response with limited resources if the Council was no longer taking part/providing adequate support.

² <https://communitysouthwark.org/news-jobs-and-events/news/monthly-state-sector-survey-our-members>

³ ³ <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DMN7KMR>

⁴ <http://communitysouthwark.org/get-involved/covid-19-supporting-vcs-local-communities/southwark-community-hub-%E2%80%93-one-stop-support>

⁵ <https://communitysouthwark.org/get-involved/covid-19-supporting-vcs-local-communities/southwark-community-hub-%E2%80%93-one-stop-support>

- Some are not sure if they will be taking part in e.g. food distribution beyond September 2020 as they may decide to resume their regular pre-covid 19 activities with social distancing measures in place. In any case, it is hard to plan long-term sustainability of the current model for those not involved in food distribution before March 2020.
- Some have observed a reduction in demand and think this will be an ongoing trend.
- There is a clear desire for a robust and flexible so that when future outbreaks occur response can be put rapidly back in place.
- It was noted that any future models should focus on clear outcomes and use existing structures/systems in place.
- Members would want to have a clear understanding of who is using the Community Hub, not just in terms of location and age but also other protected characteristics, so that any future help can be better targeted.
- There was a desire not to duplicate existing services and use structures already available e.g. community anchors/settlements, Older People's Hub, existing food banks, Southwark Food Action Alliance, Southwark Emergency Support Scheme, social prescribing, Food2You, Shop&Drop, Mutual Aid Groups.
- A need for clear communication with all Southwark residents about the purpose, target group and offer of the Community Hub was expressed. Resilience of local population could be increased further by providing clear information on what services are available and how to access them.
- The importance of continuing to have a single point of contact was repeatedly raised.
- There is a concern that the final proposal from the Review may end up being an 'all things to all people' proposal that has no tangible endpoint or proper resourcing. Whatever will be agreed will need to be backed up by adequate resources and be achievable.

Engagement with Volunteers and Mutual Aid Groups

During May and June 2020 Community Southwark undertook three research initiatives:

- A qualitative survey of Mutual Aid groups and volunteers in May 2020.
- A series of quantitative polls held during the Southwark Cross-Sector Conference on 29th May 2020, and
- Qualitative feedback from six virtual 'roundtable' discussions held during the Southwark Community Action Network Meeting on 29th June 2020.

Based on the information that was obtained from these initiatives, the report of this research⁶ aims to draw attention to the issues faced by Southwark's communities during the Covid-19 pandemic and identify some possible solutions to the issues raised in the research.

During the social action section at the Southwark Cross-Sector and Community Conference there were a number of polls. In total, Community Southwark hosted 118 attendees, and of this number 69 participated in the polls with the following results:

- 91.3% of respondents thought they would benefit from events on social action.
- 78% of respondents found WhatsApp groups/ broadcasting useful for receiving information.
- 56.8% of respondents didn't know how to get involved in their community.
- 76% would like more information on becoming a charity/ TRA, and 20% weren't sure.
- The most popular initiatives were signposting initiatives, such as our Community Maps which had been used by 61% of our audience to receive help, and our volunteer listings which were used by 50% of attendees.

The main points on experience of lockdown, volunteering and community were:

- Digital inclusion and online support: Respondents felt that most people would be unable to access support if they didn't have internet access or were not digitally savvy. Despite efforts, there are still people not being reached.
- People falling through the net: Because of the aforementioned point. Support was also largely written in English which would disproportionately affect migrant and refugee communities.
- Information Sharing and Communications: Lots of information conflicting information being shared from and between mutual aid groups and volunteers which could largely be seen as a reflection of the fear and uncertainty.
- Food Security: Fear of being unable to access food or falling foul of a scam artist pretending to be a member of a mutual aid group.
- Managing Volunteering: Many MA groups felt that there wasn't sufficient leadership from the local VCS, leaving many people to manage large numbers of volunteers.
- Managing expectations and mutual aid enthusiasm.

Respondents believed the most pressing issues in and around Southwark were:

- Digital Inclusion for old and young.
- Language inclusion: Much the same as the earlier point, there was a lot of difficulty provide help and getting access to people for who English isn't their first language.
- Emerging stronger and greener.

⁶ <https://communitysouthwark.org/sites/default/files/images/VCS%20Survey%20Results.pdf>

- Losing volunteers/ grassroots involvement: People are concerned that members of their communities will lose reasons to interact with one another once the common issue of Covid-19 is resolved.
- Social distancing.
- Food security.
- Black Lives Matter and the effects of Covid-19.
- Keeping people connected after Covid-19.

In terms of next steps, the following were identified:

- Find New Ways to Support Digital inclusion and Online Access. This could include setting up local hardware donation schemes.
- Pairing people with organisations & buddying up with people.
- Ensuring that plans are incorporated within a wider framework a borough-wide plans, and not isolated. The VCS and local government must develop and collaborate on projects to deliver services that keep people safe and healthy.
- Upskill and train TRAs, MA groups, and volunteers with training and resources.
- Increase volunteer capacity, training and DBS checks to support volunteers manually checking on people who may be falling through the net.
- Ensure that migrants who are cautious of authorities are able to access support in safety from local government, police, et al since they may view these as deterrents.
- More proactive advocacy on behalf of communities, such as starting petitions and growing participation in Southwark Voice.
- Develop more.
- Continue to bring people together and share ideas and meet like-minded people- give people a reason to interact!
- Communications.

The views of those the hub supported

In August 2020 a telephone survey was conducted of a representative sample of those who had received support from the community hub. This revealed the following:



| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Reason for seeking support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of those who responded were either shielding or self-isolating as they were in a vulnerable group. |
| Future support needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40% responded they were likely to need food support in future – of these 53% were from BAME backgrounds. 19% thought they would need financial support – of which 17% were from BAME backgrounds. 9% needed debt advice – of which 76% were from BAME backgrounds. 16% needed mental wellbeing support – of which 55% were from BAME backgrounds. 12% needed physical wellbeing support - .of which 58% were from BAME backgrounds. |
| Quality of support received | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74% rated the service they received as good or excellent. |
| Ethnicity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of those responding were from BAME backgrounds. |
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 59% were aged over 55. |
| Disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63% regarded themselves as having a disability. |
| Gender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of those responding were female. |

The Council received many positive comments on the work on the Community Hub including:

“I would also like to thank Southwark Council for my food package...In such a hard time it is amazing how Southwark Council has pulled together for their residents. It was a very emotional moment when the worker knocked my door and handed me the package.”

“Good morning to all involved I just wanted to write my huge thank you for the food parcel support since I received my NHS letter listing me as identified risk due to my underlying condition and meds I am on.”

“Thank you so much for contacting me on Thursday. It really made me feel that I was being looked after.”

“My family and I are so grateful for this because we have 2 vulnerable people living in my house and so we've all been at home for the last couple of weeks living on food bought before all this started. The food means a lot for us”

The Southwark Food Action Alliance (SFAA)

The SFAA officially formed in September 2017 from Garden Organic's Southwark Food Poverty Project, funded by The Hirschmann Foundation. The SFAA's formation came about in response to nearly a decade of austerity, rising living costs, changes to benefits and funding cuts to local services that have resulted in a significant increase in foodbank use and overall food insecurity in Southwark.

In November 2017, the SFAA became a member of Food Power, which is a national network connecting food alliances which are working to tackle food insecurity. Currently membership stands at 60 statutory, voluntary and community organisations meeting bimonthly to explore cross-sector initiatives and new ways to work together. Community Southwark is now leading the coordination of the Alliance.

During the Covid-19 outbreak, SFAA supported the Southwark food banks, and the rest of the food community, to get much needed food to the vulnerable in the borough and those self-isolating.

Southwark Food Action Alliance collaborated with Community Mapping to map⁷ all the food related activities within Southwark. They mapped essential services such as foodbanks, community fridges, community meals and local delivery services during COVID-19. The map displays where people facing food insecurity and key organisations can signpost beneficiaries to help people in need.

The SFAA developed the Fairer Southwark Food Security Action Plan⁸ in July 2019 to address food insecurity in the borough. The plan is based on a detailed strategic needs assessment on household food insecurity conducted by the Public Health team at Southwark Council⁹. It involved consultation with over 50 stakeholders and was funded by the Mayor of London and Southwark Council Public Health. The ongoing work is being co-ordinated through the Southwark Food Action Alliance and overseen by the Public Health division of Southwark Council.

The intention was always to review that plan after a year and is now being reviewed in the light of Covid-19 and the learning from the community hub.

Views of the neighbourhood food hubs

As outlined above food deliveries also worked through a network of 8 neighbourhood food hubs, located across the borough: Pecan, Pembroke House, Albrighton Community Centre, Central Southwark Community Hub, St George the Martyr, Time and Talents, Paxton Green and Lewington.

The neighbourhood hubs met together on a regular basis to co-ordinate their activity. On 6th August 2020 they came together to discuss their views and plans going forward. Feedback from that session was as follows:

⁷ <https://sfaa.communitymaps.org.uk/project/sfaa-food-map?layer=1¢er=51.4788:-0.0678:13>

⁸ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna/wider-determinants-of-health?chapter=4>

⁹ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna>

General comments:

- Positive and heartened to see the voice of the hubs and wider sector reflected.
- Recognition that remains at a high-level due to the short time frame.
- Request that review groups becomes working group to focus on detail post-September.

Leadership and resourcing:

- To make this work will require real leadership and resources.
- Not necessarily about one person but a clear operational vehicle and a system for quick contact between the council and other agencies.
- Requires access to decision-making and/or allowing decisions to be taken on the ground.

Outcomes:

- Still need defining and the challenge is to be specific and measurable on the broader aspirations of “reducing inequality and poverty”.
- Reducing food insecurity needs to be included as an outcome, as we have a clear baseline for this.

Variety of offers:

- Needs a spectrum of offers, as there are different reasons as to why someone is food insecure – no silver bullet

Pilot opportunities:

- Pecan /Trussell Trust pathfinders programme.
- Walworth Living Room.
- Rotherhithe community pantry/kitchen.

Inclusivity & mutuality:

- Need to ensure service users are involved when developing new models.
- How do we support people to access community and not just a service?

Communication:

- Clarity of communication is essential – including access to information and evolution of the current ‘single-front door’.

Policy/Funding:

- Link to wider policy beyond the council, including GLA work on social infrastructure, and the emerging findings of the Kruger review.

With regard to their own views of future plans, barriers and challenges these were summarised as follows:

Future Plans:

| Organisaton | July to September | September Onwards |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Pecan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying on as normal – deliveries from the warehouse and Mount View. Moving out of Mount View by 10th September. • Pantry is now open again from St Luke's Church. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the shielded list of just under 11,000 residents, the community hub has dealt with 10,021 vulnerable residents in council housing, 5,312 people with social care packages, 70 people via the No Recourse to Public Funds Service and 2,017 referrals/self-referrals from residents living in non-council temporary accommodation. • In April, there were almost 3,000 calls received relating to the COVID-19 outbreak via the centralised COVID support line. Most calls relate to food requests (26%), shopping needs (20%) or medical or isolation advice (17%). • Want to be back in normal food bank sessions. Will be five food bank sites in total, new one in the St George's Centre. Open for collections, with signposting information. Working out if can spend time with those collecting food to provide support. • Anticipating that there will still be a need for some deliveries, but on a smaller scale. • New pantry to open on Peckham Park Road, TBC early September. This will have a 'meeting point/café'. • Trussell Trust launch a pathfinders programme, will be on the first 15 in the country to be part of this, can share learnings from across the country. |
| Pembroke House | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with deliveries and moving to the current distribution hub over to the Walworth Living Room. • Will hold an online public | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision to be made in the next month depending on resources, but aiming to continue with step changes over the next six months. • Building towards a mixed model of |

discussion for Walworth residents, partners and local groups (25th August) to discuss role Pembroke House's role around food insecurity over the longer-term.

collection and deliveries, bringing in other services in line with the original plans for the Walworth Living Room.

- Longer-term, the Walworth Living Room will reopen as a community kitchen and café and Pembroke House will work with partners, Public Health and SFAA to develop the Walworth Community Food Hub, incorporating a range of local projects from food growing, cafes, food distribution etc.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Central Southwark Community Hub</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting collections again, so can have face to face conversations. Been able to have some discussions with residents online. • Working with Southwark Pensioners, how can continue to support some of their residents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoping to move as the church need the hall back and more space would allow for support services to be delivered alongside the food. • Increase collections and reduce deliveries. Will continue to provide cooked food as part of this. • Will not be going back to 'normal' due to the larger numbers being supported. |
| <p>Lewington Centre</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring if can run on one day rather than across two days. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to continue, but will need to ongoing Council support particularly with food supplies. • More collection rather than deliveries. |
| <p>Albrighton</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will continue as is until September. Likely to have to reduce the number of deliveries, as not enough funding for staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will have some capacity to carry on and waiting to see what is needed locally and how the offer in Albrighton will link into the wider offer. |
| <p>Paxton Green Time Bank</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrying on as usual. SE21, 24 & 26 for the majority of deliveries. • Working with SAR as a new partner. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure, could be relocating. • Happy to continue to provide some form of food support but the model will depend on the new site and will likely to need to be in a reduced capacity, with a more targeted approach and collections. |
| <p>St George the Martyr</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-introducing collections, with two deliveries a week still. • By the end of August hoping more will be collecting. Using pedal-me to help with deliveries, but this has cost implications. • Funding to operate until the end of August. • Continuing to provide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring a pantry model at the crypt, with a socially distanced café to provide support alongside it. • Continuing to provide cooked meals with recipe cards in the bags. |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| | cooked meals. | |
| Time & Talents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking to residents and removing those from the list who no longer need support, but still accepting new referrals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keen to return to some of the other services that were running prior to covid-19. Would like an agreement with other hubs to pass on referrals where appropriate. Not planning to stop, but this would reduce the numbers being supported and also any duplication. Exploring a pantry model or community fridge. Could this be run in an outdoor space. |

Views on barriers and challenges:

| Organisaton | Views on the three main barriers | Additional barrier |
|--|--|---|
| Pecan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of volunteers (difficulties in August due to holidays). Not been able to develop relationship with residents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mount View space is not available/limited from 10th September. |
| Pembroke House | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for food, loss of income from premises. Volunteer recruitment, loss of 15-20 volunteers a week (currently 190 on food bank operation). Finding a hook, way forward beyond September. How to take this forward into action. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> September to December: challenges are more likely to become more acute. Additional programmes will need to restart at the Walworth Living Room and the space is currently used for the food distribution. Exploring different ways can use the space flexibly. |
| Central Southwark Community Hub | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venue (as the church and service users want to return). The new space needs to meet the growing need of clients. Volunteers are returning to work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venue needs to be appropriate for future plans. How to continue with higher numbers financially and venue wise? |
| Lewington Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not many volunteer drivers making deliveries challenging. Household items (toiletries and cleaning products) are not always donated. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would need the Council's ongoing support to carry this on and would like to look at different models. |
| Albrighton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding, grants are looking for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have capacity to continue long |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| | <p>future weeks but have arrears that need to be covered and not consistent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough funds for drivers, so may have to reduce the number of deliveries. • Unable to support everyone who visits the fridge, so unequal support for residents. • The Latin American community offer have little data/minutes and so calls to other services for support is very difficult – need wrap around support at the centre, particularly with Social Services. | <p>term but need more funding to make it possible. Concerned that there are a growing number of residents who are struggling financially.</p> |
| Paxton Green Time Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding volunteer drivers, currently a lot of deliveries by walking volunteers. • Managing anxieties amongst volunteers and service users. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocating could be challenging short-term but ultimately be positive. |
| St George the Martyr | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack funding for the current work beyond August. • Volunteer recruitment as volunteers return to work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving towards longer-term sustainability of a pantry/café model depends on being able to offer more face-to-face services again. |
| Time & Talents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space. • Staff time and volunteers. • If people are coming for advice, what infrastructure is in place for these residents? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving the food distribution to another venue could feel disjointed to the main site and staffing levels will be impacted, as cannot multi task between projects when in different venues. |

Ideas for the Council's longer-term role in food security:

- Southwark's approach needs to support a journey of moving residents out of food insecurity, not just about providing emergency food but for example providing access to services, support, skills etc. and ending reliance on food banks
 - Hubs were keen to be able to start meeting with residents, rather than just supplying food, so that this support can be provided
 - Need to identify what support services, within the Council and from external partners, could be based within food hubs
 - Need reassess who is around the table if we are going to tackle the root causes of food-insecurity (e.g. not necessarily just those who have stepped forward to support food distribution in the current crisis)
- Need to produce a framework or plan for how the different approaches can work together
 - Removes duplication and can identify gaps for other partners to be involved

- Identify areas where there are food desserts and where there are no food hubs and explore what could be put in place in these areas
- Sets out clearly how community food hubs can integrate other services to support residents beyond providing emergency food parcels
- Ensure greater coordination between hubs
 - Establish greater coordination with referrals being passed between hubs
 - Centrally procurement of healthy, fresh food to then be distributed – if procured centrally could reduce the price and reduce food wastage
- Funding is an issue for a number of the hubs
 - Similar to venues, could new venues be used to generate income streams
 - How can support services being integrated with existing funding, so it is aligned rather than seeking new funding
- Engage with businesses and different partners
 - Extend the Good Food Retail Pilot, encouraging convenience stores to have a healthy and affordable offer, particularly in food deserts
 - Contact local business forums to see if resources and expertise can be utilised
- Need more robust data to be collated
 - Identify very local trends as they change, for example where and which groups are experiencing food insecurity, so that support can be tailored
 - Making sure the lived experienced voice of residents who are food insecure is part of this, to understand what they want and need
 - Share best practice from other boroughs

Central principles of the response

As well as the key findings above there have been a number of principles that have emerged in evidence provided to the review group and have underpinned the way that partners have worked together in the Community Hub. These principles have been a strong feature of the discussions at the review group and can provide a framework for *how* we work together in the next phase.

Clarity of purpose

The Covid-19 crisis has provided a clear common challenge to partners across the borough. Meeting the unprecedented demands of the pandemic has not simply brought partners from across sectors, but it has brought us together as *equals* working towards a common goal to support those most affected through the crisis. The challenge will be to maintain this clarity of purpose and vision as the emergency situation recedes.

We need a clear vision for the borough that can hold us together and maintain the urgency and equanimity glimpsed through the Community Hub response. There may be lessons from elsewhere e.g. Wigan, Deal and Frome¹⁰. But as a borough we need a tangible vision for the borough that can mobilise and motivate all partners to meet the challenges to come.

Collective resources

Through the community hub response there has been evidence of a shift away from traditional requests for financial support towards new offers of resources. Flowing from the clear common purpose above, resources have been pooled and thought given to how they can be used more effectively by coordinating and aligning efforts.

Although the council has stepped forward with critical emergency funding, the council or local commissioners have not simply been in the position as ‘payers’ while other organisations pitch for funding to deliver activity. Instead, the wider community hub response has been a cooperative effort: VCS organisations have brought mothballed buildings into use for food distribution, church and informal groups have stepped forward with self-generated funds, local funders have combined funding pots to offer larger strategic grants to established organisations and smaller grants to grassroots outfits, social prescribers have joined the borough through new 5-year central funding streams, and local businesses and social enterprises have cooked meals and taken on the burden of deliveries.

With the challenges that are to come it will be more important than ever to retain this collective perspective on resourcing, building a more rounded view of the assets and resources available to the borough that can be leveraged and coordinated more effectively.

Operations not just strategy

The Community Hub response has been focused on *practical* work together. Over the past 5 months we have moved quickly to develop new initiatives and tested them rapidly: from

¹⁰ Wigan: <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/The-Deal/Deal-Communities/index.aspx>
Frome: <https://www.compassionate-communitiesuk.co.uk/projects>

referral systems and shared well-being calls, to food distribution models. These projects have been designed, trialled and improved in real-time. Rather than setting out plans for partnership working we have worked together on practical projects, forming new partnerships along the way.

It is this proactive approach that means we have achieved so much in a short period of time. The challenge will be to retain this focus on operations as we develop the longer-term strategy and vision for the borough and how this can influence national or regional policy.

It will be important to continue to trial and pilot activities quickly to inform and improve the recommendations set out in this report, maintaining the momentum and working relationships established through the Community Hub.

Relationships and communication

This way of working has relied on a different type of communication. We have moved beyond consultation or liaison groups and into working groups. Membership of these groups has been drawn from across sectors but also, importantly, from across traditional teams within the council. These groups have had quick access to relevant decision-makers, allowing the response to develop swiftly as the situation evolved.

If maintained, the relationships that have formed through these working groups, both within and beyond the council, have the potential for a long-lasting impact and these working groups provide a possible model for how we can retain the practical focus highlighted above.

The challenge will be to retain and invest in these cross-sector relationships as business returns to normal, and to evolve the membership and purpose of working groups according to the priority areas of work that emerge from the recommendations below. These working groups have also been small through the early phases of the crisis and included those with the immediate capacity to step forward and offer support and are different to other similar groups because they focus on alleviating poverty. A further challenge will be to open out working groups and clear lines of communication to established networks and representative bodies, whilst keeping the focus on agile and swift working.

Airtable and the Customer Relationship Management System

During the pandemic Southwark Council worked with Pembroke House and Community Southwark to create a live directory of COVID-19 response services offered by organisations and groups across Southwark. This was done through information from Community Southwark's needs assessment survey and talking to groups and organisations.

The directory is held on 'Airtable' and is hosted by Community Southwark. Airtable is software that is a spreadsheet and database hybrid that currently hosts the most up-to-date information on VCS services and is a useful tool for the sector and the public. The Airtable is organised by the type of service. It shows the organisation, website and contact details, where the service operates (by ward), who the service is for and how frequent it is. Alongside the new Microsoft/Hitachi CRM application that was developed with the council to hold details of vulnerable people including those on the shielded list it is used to make referrals and manage cases.

There is considerable potential for developing these systems for managing and measuring how the needs of vulnerable people in Southwark are being met.

Data and technology

Effective use of data and intelligence has been critical to the response throughout the crisis. The new CRM system adopted by the council to manage the shielding lists has offered the capability to merge existing internal databases and lists in new ways. On top of this, the new referral systems with the VCS and health partners have offered quick interfaces that have not otherwise been in place. Taken together, this has led to sharing of information in smarter, more effective ways and offers a more rounded and real-time picture of vulnerabilities and needs across the borough.

This work is clearly hugely promising, and provides a potential model for more wide-reaching sharing of intelligence and analytics – one that could be of critical importance as the immediate public health crisis begins to shift into longer-term economic challenges.

As has been the case with many digital projects through lockdown, progress has been significantly quicker than in normal times, but this work has also raised a range of important technical questions, from GDPR and data-protection protocols, to appropriate list management and shared unique reference numbers. The challenge will be to set clear parameters for the next phase of digital work, flowing from outcomes set out in the next phase of the community hub.

Mutuality and reciprocity

As above, a marked feature of Covid-19 has been the groundswell of community spirit. Over the past 5 months is that residents and community have supported one another in novel and exciting ways, building new relationships based on reciprocity and neighbourliness. New entry-points to wider support have also emerged that work through existing trusting relationships residents hold within their community, whether through community centres, schools, TRAs or GP surgeries.

While a number of the recommendations of the review group centre on services, it is clear that the answers to the current and coming crisis won't *simply* be about creating new services, aligning existing ones more effectively or even creating new referral routes between them.

It is critical that we look for changes in the *way* that council, VCS and health services are delivered in order to increase opportunities for local residents and organisations to support one another. The longer-term legacy of the Community Hub should seek to work with and alongside this growing mutuality in local neighbourhoods, enhancing and facilitating it, but not looking to replace it.

Recommendations

Building a longer-term legacy from the community hub means facing a number of challenges.

First, until there is an effective vaccine or treatment for Covid-19 we will need to manage the transition from the currently emergency phase of the crisis through the next phases of lockdown, as well as remain prepared to scale-up activity again based on any future spikes in the virus. The first two recommendations set out below cover this transition period.

Second, we need a clear framework to build on the lessons and promise of the community hub work over the longer-term. This requires clarity of vision, operating model and underlying principles. Taken together, this framework forms the governing recommendation of this report.

Third, as set out in the key findings above the review process has touched on a number of wide-ranging issues that will require concerted work by partners over the longer-term. Many of these issues touch on areas of work that are already being taken forward by existing networks or groups. We identify a number of these contingencies and make recommendations for how these areas of work could be aligned with the framework set out here for the borough.

Transition Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – A Managed Transition: That all partners put in place a managed transition for people supported by the COVID19 Community Hub, stepping down support where it is no longer needed and ensuring people who need ongoing assistance are matched with the appropriate support.

Southwark's COVID19 Community Hub has been a remarkable success. Over 10,000 people have received significant support. Whilst much of this has been to meet short-term needs resulting from lockdown, a significant number of people need ongoing support either to meet pre-existing needs or as a result of the recession the pandemic has triggered.

It is vital that as a partnership we ensure a managed transition for people supported by the COVID19 Community Hub as it steps down. This means stepping down support where it is no longer needed and ensuring people who need ongoing assistance are matched with appropriate support.

This means making proactive contact with all existing recipients of services to understand the underlying causes of the issues they have faced and ensure that they get the appropriate support whether this is advice on income maximisation, access to benefits, mental health support, employment advice and support or other forms of welfare support.

Recommendation 2 – The Emergency Operating Model: The council and partners should agree a Covid19 community support plan that sets out the emergency operating model in the event of a further spike in Covid-19 or a further lockdown.

The risk of a second wave of COVID19 remains high. Whilst Southwark’s response to the first wave had many strengths there are lessons that can be learnt and improvements that can be made. A clear plan needs to be agreed by all partners to ensure the best possible response to any future increases in the local infection rate.

Legacy Recommendations

(i) Governing Recommendation: *Building a Borough where everyone can contribute*

Recommendation 3 –A new alliance: The council, VCS and health partners should work together to strengthen and further develop a Southwark community support alliance. This should be focused on providing social support that delivers long-term reductions in inequality, combining resources, building on the successes of the Community Hub, and founded on the vision, outcomes, principles and framework set out below.

The success of our Community Hub has shown the potential for a stronger more integrated alliance of social support. A wealth of organisations are working to tackle poverty and inequality locally but support is fragmented. There is an opportunity to better integrate support in ways that build on the solidarity and reciprocity we have seen during this pandemic and on the pre-existing work on social regeneration charters that the council and partners have been carrying out.

Here we set out a suggested framework for this legacy work, including an outline vision, operating framework and working principles.

Vision: *Building a borough where everyone can contribute*

Through the Community Hub we have seen that effective partnership requires clarity of purpose and a vision that all partners can not only sign-up to but also one that can bring people to the table as equals, focussed on what they can bring to the collective effort.

Through Covid we have also seen focus on fall on two cohorts in particular: firstly, those who are prevented from playing a meaningful role in the borough because of struggles with food insecurity, lack of employment, debt or because of their immigration status; and secondly,

those residents who come forward in new waves to offer their time and resources to contribute to their local communities.

So by *Building a Borough where everyone can contribute* we want to capture these three commitments:

- No-one should be prevented from realising their aspirations and playing a meaningful role in their community because of challenges poverty, food security, suitable housing or debt
- We will provide platforms for residents and communities to support one-another, celebrating the mutuality and reciprocity that has flourished through this period
- As partners, we will bring our collective resources to the table to build this vision for the borough

Outcomes:

The high-level outcomes for this work should be:

- To increase the number of Southwark residents who are able to give back to and realise their aspirations in their community.
- To improve outcomes for Southwark residents in ways that reduce inequalities in:
 - Self-efficacy
 - Health & Wellbeing
 - Resilience
 - Income
 - Food security & nutrition
 - Employment
 - Education & skills
 - Debt
 - Homelessness
- To give residents confidence that they can access the right support to meet their needs and to support one another effectively

The measures for these outcomes could be linked to the Social Regeneration Indicators¹¹ will that were developed by the council with VCS partners to monitor the high-level impact that our actions are having across the borough and the progress we're making in achieving regeneration for all ambitions.

Operating Framework

As per the key findings of the report, clarity of vision needs to be matched by a focus on specific activities that are developed at the appropriate tiers: whether the centre, the neighbourhood or at population-level. This work is to be taken forward by a

Centre:

- A borough-wide access point – so people can find the support that is available to them quickly

¹¹ <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna/social-regeneration-indicators>

- A central information and knowledge hub – providing up to date information on central government policies, Southwark’s policies and procedures, changes in regulations and training support for advice providers
- A Southwark intelligence hub – building on the data-sharing lessons of the community hub to develop a shared intelligence hub to combine and analyse data on vulnerabilities and needs across the borough

Neighbourhood

- A network of neighbourhood community hubs/anchor organisations – providing advice and support in each part of the borough, with an agreed common role but provided by organisations that each have their own unique mission and operating model. Including making best use of space and the collective estate within neighbourhoods to support delivery
- Local support for grassroots community groups (MA groups & TRAs etc.) at the neighbourhood-level – working to provide existing activity in a federated model that is embedded with local

Population

- Specialist support for population groups, provided appropriately between the centre and emedded within neighbourhoods, including leveraging existing activities of:
 - Older People & Carers Hub
 - Wellbeing Hub
 - All-age Disabilities Hub
 - Children and Families Centres
- Advice and support services (benefits, employment, housing, debt, immigration, social care etc.) provided by the voluntary and public sector, including independent advice.

Partnership principles

Building on the work of the Community Hub to date this partnership should adopt the following principles:

- Mutuality and reciprocity – partners and organisations contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it
- Codesign and codelivery – partners and residents working together to design the network and share approaches and tools
- Clarity of purpose - working to a clear common purpose
- Collective resources – working to make the best uses of the resources we have in Southwark across the system an across all partners
- Operations not just strategy – getting on with practical work together across the system
- Relationships and communication - a partnership of equals across sectors
- Data and technology - Effective use of data and intelligence to achieve more

Support principles

- Mutuality and reciprocity – people and communities contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it, and being valued for what they contribute
- People are fully involved in identifying their needs and planning the support they receive

- People have the opportunity to build on their strengths – planning of support helps individuals to identify their strengths at a personal and community level
- People have access to the information, advice and guidance they need to meet their needs
- People feel that they have access to services to improve their lives and wellbeing

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of this new arrangement should include:

- Residents with vulnerabilities that lie under the radar – those without recourse to public funds and not registered as such, undocumented migrants and those beneath statutory thresholds or out of touch with formal support services
- Residents on the cusp of coping – residents vulnerable to being thrown into crisis for example through the loss of insecure employment, or struggles with health, debt or housing.
- Residents who do not have access to support networks either statutory, voluntary and community sector to get the support that they need including those who are self-isolating due to Covid-19
- People who have come forward to volunteer.

(ii) Recommendations on related work

The issues raised at the review group have been wide-ranging and has touched on a range of issues that relate to work taken forward by other groups and initiatives. Here we set out a range of recommendations that would bring these workstreams into line with the framework and vision of our governing recommendation.

Recommendation 4 - Embedding services in neighbourhoods: Partners should embed access to existing service provision within neighbourhoods. This should include testing new ways of providing housing, employment, skills, money, social care and immigration support in local communities - including testing how support from established public & VCS providers can be made accessible in partnership with local community 'anchor' organisations rooted in each part of the borough.

Food poverty is often one of the most pressing issues people face but is rarely the root cause of their difficulties. To maximise their wellbeing, many people need to be able to address housing, employment, skills, money, social care, immigration and wider issues. However, people often find the support that is available hard to access.

It is therefore proposed to test new ways of providing housing, employment, skills, money, social care and immigration support in local communities - including testing how support from established public & VCS providers can be made accessible in partnership with local community 'anchor' organisations rooted in each part of the borough Partners should

undertake a number of pilots for providing improved access to these kinds of support and advice.

Recommendation 5 – Making the Most of Social Prescribing: Health partners should explore how social prescribing can become a central element of the community support alliance.

The link between primary care and wider social support in the borough could be much stronger. The NHS has invested in a five-year social prescribing programme to help overcome this. Integrating this work with the Southwark community support alliance has the potential to achieve a leap forward in NHS/VCS/Council coordination

It is proposed to explore how social prescribing can become a central element of the social/community support alliance.

The aim is to better join up 'social prescribing' services that have developed organically in Southwark including the Primary Care Network social prescribing link workers so that this best supports Community Hub partners, can assist with collaborative/cross working and improve outcomes for local residents.

Collaboration and communication between partners will ensure a joined up, multi-disciplinary approach, which will reduce duplication and cater to the widest possible range of health and care needs.

A key principle is no wrong door for those accessing the support that they need every door is the right door,

The coordination role by the social prescribing service can ensure residents have access to a range of local services appropriate to their individual needs. Services involved will be able to specialise and maintain focus with wider social needs being covered by partner service and organisations involved.

A focus for this work will be to consider if any resources will be allocated to the VCS groups handling these referrals. This should include looking at how we can either bring in additional funding or seek to repurpose existing funding to support a more sustainable model of social prescribing that delivers on the following principles:

- Builds on, enhances and takes into account existing social prescribing activities and approaches (recognising there are already a number of models of social prescribing in Southwark).
- Recognise and foster the diversity of the VCS in Southwark.
- Develop thriving place-based social support alliances in clusters/neighbourhoods; enabling community assets to develop connections and relationships, and to share resources.
- Offer a mix of formal and informal support dependent on individual's needs.
- Be underpinned by a shared outcomes framework to measure impact, supported by integrated IT and data.

- Develop a new type of collaborative relationship with commissioners, one that enables the VCS to flourish and addresses the power imbalance between statutory and VCS partners.
- Align and connect existing community connectors/navigators to act as a network within a geographical area (mitigating loss of institutional knowledge/operating in silos).
- Develop a payment model that supports the VCS to thrive and be sustainable (while also recognising that not everything the VCS does should be formally commissioned).

Recommendation 6 – Building effective referral systems: The council, VCS and health partners should develop and embed a social support referral system – building on the success of the work Community Southwark have been leading using the Airtable platform.

As part of the work on the Community Hub partners have achieved a leap forward in the sharing of referrals and data between public and VCS bodies. There is an opportunity to embed this work and in so doing to reduce duplication of effort and achieve better outcomes for Southwark residents.

It is therefore recommended to continue to develop and embed a social support referral system – building on the success of the work Community Southwark have been leading using the Airtable platform. A key aspect of this work will be to look at how to achieve better joining up of the different existing systems that partners use rather than building a new single system. It will also be important that access is provided to good quality information for residents and for professionals so that people know what services are available and how to access them.

Recommendation 7 – Encouraging and Supporting Volunteering: The review recognised the significant role that volunteers have played in supporting vulnerable people in the borough. The review group recommends that Community Southwark should work with partners to find ways to celebrate and support volunteering.

Southwark residents have responded to the pandemic by giving unprecedented amounts of their time to volunteer for their community. Whilst volunteer numbers are dropping from their peak in April-June there continues to be a large number of people wishing to give back, including those who have also benefited from support.

Community Southwark is planning to recognise the work of volunteers on covid-19 as part of Southwark Stars ceremony in November 2020

The partners should work with Community Southwark on a joint piece of work on encouraging and supporting volunteering. This will include how we can develop volunteers

that reflect the demography of local communities, and what we can offer volunteers (e.g. functional skills training, career pathways for younger volunteers). This work should go beyond placing volunteers in established organisations to working with mutual aid other less formal community sector organisations.

Recommendation 8 – Aligning plans for emergency food provision: Partners should work with the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop a stronger common approach to emergency food provision, including establishing aligned criteria/thresholds, ways of avoiding duplication of service to individual people and shared relationships with food suppliers.

COVID19 has made starkly clear the levels of food insecurity in our borough. Until the multiple inadequacies of the UK's welfare system are addressed there will continue to be a need for foodbanks. Opportunities exist to further strengthen collaboration and coordination between Southwark's foodbanks.

It is recommended to develop a stronger common approach to emergency food provision – working through the Southwark Food Action Alliance, including establishing aligned criteria/thresholds, ways of avoiding duplication of service to individual people and shared relationships with food suppliers.

Recommendation 9 - Developing a common long-term approach to tackling food insecurity: Partners should scale up community run low cost food projects - working through the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop options for affordable food provision that support people's dignity and independence (including community supermarkets, pantries etc.), linked to the review of the food security plan.

Partners in Southwark share a long-term aim to end food insecurity and poverty and the need for foodbanks. As part of that aim there is strong interest in collaborating to develop more affordable community run food options. There needs to be some consideration to how to measure food insecurity, to allow for a better idea of the scale of the problem and issues that our residents face. A range of initiatives are already happening across the borough that can be built on

The review recommends scaling up community run low cost food projects - working through the Southwark Food Action Alliance to develop options for affordable food provision that support people's dignity and independence (including community supermarkets, pantries etc.), linked to the review of the food security plan. It essential when scaling this up that the voices of those with lived experience need to be heard and included when options are developed and that these services are co-produced.

Recommendation 10 – Understanding Southwark’s hidden populations: Research should be undertaken to better understand Southwark’s population who do not have full recourse to public funds – to identify the scale of the population and the issues they face. Working with the VCS groups that are currently supporting large number of people in this situation to undertake the research.

Throughout the review we have heard that a high proportion of people tipped into poverty by COVID1 do not have full recourse to public funds. Without a welfare system to fall back on people in this situation have been left in acute financial hardship. There is an urgent need to better understand the scale of this issue and to make the case for a more humane immigration system.

Partners should undertake research to better understand Southwark’s population who do not have full recourse to public funds to identify the scale of the population and the issues they face. Working with the VCS groups that are currently supporting large number of people in this situation to undertake the research.

Recommendation 11 – Tackling Digital Exclusion: There is an urgent need to prioritise connecting digitally excluded people, including identifying how access to devices and data can be improved for people who cannot currently afford them and strengthening digital skills.

Partners in Southwark have had incredible success in using digital platforms help provide social support during COVID19. Many more people have engaged with these tools than might have been thought. However, the pandemic has also starkly shown the scale of exclusion for people who do not have access to a device or data, or who do not have digital skills.

It is important moving forward to prioritise connecting digitally excluded people – including identify how access to devices and data can be improved for people who cannot currently afford them and strengthening digital skills.

Recommendation 12 – Supporting grassroots organisations: Community Southwark should review how capacity building support in the borough can best support the development of Southwark social/ community support alliance together with development/implementation of a formal partnership model of delivery with Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.

There is a strong desire across VCS organisations in Southwark to work together to improve social support. Almost all VCS organisations in the borough are small and need support to

develop. There is strong interest in doing this in reciprocal ways that link more established and emerging organisations so they can learn and improve support in their areas together.

The council will work with Community Southwark to review how capacity building support in the borough can best support the development of Southwark social/ community support alliance.

Recommendation 13 – Leveraging existing funds: Funders in Southwark and beyond should consider how they can best use their existing resources to support the delivery of these recommendations.

In the first phase of the response to the pandemic local and regional funders stepped forward to support the huge scale of community activity meeting the needs of vulnerable people impacted by Covid-19. Businesses and others also came forward with donations of food, other goods and services.

The review recommends that funders in Southwark should consider how they can best use their existing resources to support the delivery of these recommendations.

Recommendation 14 – Tackling inequalities: The review group heard evidence on the significant disproportionate impact on some communities. The review therefore recommends that all partners should:

- Undertake joint work to understand those who were and remain worst affected by Covid-19, for example BAME groups.
- Improve the way they collect, use and act on data moving forward, covering all equalities groups.

There were a number of groups that were identified as experiencing a disproportionately negative impact of Covid-19. An overarching theme to the partnership response has been to focus on protecting the most vulnerable in society. To identify these groups requires a thorough analysis of all the data available within the council and key stakeholders. In particular, this would include a review of monitoring data on local residents accessing services both before and during lockdown to identify changing patterns of demand and emerging trends, especially since services have moved predominantly online.

All partners should work together to understand the disproportionate impacts and all partners should improve the way they collect, use and act on data on this going forward, covering all equalities groups.

Recommendation 15 – Principles for working together: The partnership should adopt the following principles in working together:

- Mutuality and reciprocity – people and organisations contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it.
- Codesign – all partners and residents working together to design the alliance and share approaches and tools.
- Clarity of purpose - working to a clear common purpose.
- Collective resources – working to make the best uses of the resources we have in Southwark across the system and across all partners.
- Operations not just strategy – getting on with practical work together across the system.
- Relationships and communication - a partnership of equals across sectors.
- Data and technology - Effective use of data and intelligence to achieve more.

Both this and recommendation 16 are key enablers to the longer term approach.

Recommendation 16 – Principles for providing support: The partnership should adopt the following principles for providing support moving forward:

- Mutuality and reciprocity – people and communities contributing what they can as well as receiving support when they need it, and being valued for what they contribute.
- People are fully involved in identifying their needs and planning the support they receive.
- People have the opportunity to build on their strengths – planning of support helps individuals to identify their strengths at a personal and community level.
- People have access to the information, advice and guidance they need to meet their needs.
- People feel that they have access to services and less formal groups that improve their lives and wellbeing.



