

Item No. 26.	Classification: Open	Date: 7 December 2021	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Response to the health and social care scrutiny commission - mental health inequalities of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young people	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		Electoral ward(s); ALL	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Evelyn Akoto, Health and Wellbeing	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR EVELYN AKOTO, CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Over the last 21 months as the pandemic has evolved, it has become increasingly evident that the impacts of Covid19 have not been felt equally across society, including in the area of mental health.

Prior to the pandemic we were already acutely aware of the mental health inequalities affecting people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, and unfortunately these inequalities have now widened yet further.

Moreover, research shows that the pandemic has had a greater negative impact on the mental health of children and young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds than their white peers.

I therefore welcome the comprehensive range of recommendations from the health and social care scrutiny commission and the opportunity that this has presented for us to examine gaps in our current provision.

This report documents our response to the following broad areas of Scrutiny recommendations: Youth and Play spaces, police and criminal justice system, vaccine take up and equity of access, facilitating the wider system to be proactively anti-racist, ensuring therapies are culturally appropriate and geographically accessible, providers developing new prevention and early help approaches, Mental Health First Aiders, diversity of the Health & Wellbeing Board, development of a network of Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic young people to inform decision making and adoption of a Race Equality Framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the response to the health and social care scrutiny commission - mental health inequalities of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young people, be noted.
2. That delivery of the recommendations be linked to priorities within the

Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is currently being refreshed.

3. That progress against the recommendations be presented at a future Cabinet meeting in 6 months.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. The health and social care scrutiny commission report - mental health inequalities of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young people, was discussed at the Cabinet meeting in September 2021 (agenda item 22).
5. Eleven recommendations were made. This report sets out a response to each recommendation and details whether, when and how the recommendations will be taken forward.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Recommendation One

The provision of physical and online Youth and Play spaces for young people ought to be prioritised, in recognition of the importance of the social support from adult and peers that young people are able to access in social spaces. Keeping these places open as safely as possible during any future lockdowns ought to be a key objective. The Youth New Deal ought to keep these outcomes in mind when commissioning.

6. All three council run youth clubs re-opened their doors as soon as government guidance allowed in April 2021 with detached sessions at Kingswood Estate continuing. The service has been operating full opening hours since (with Covid safety risk assessments and controls in place). During lockdowns the service moved to online delivery, outdoor football sessions and detached work on Brandon and Kingswood. The online sessions were a mixture of workshops, activities and competitions which included quizzes and games, fitness sessions, arts and crafts, stop & search talks, bullying, dance and football discussions.
7. The play service partially re-opened in May 2021 with safe outdoor only sessions with restricted numbers to facilitate social distancing. Initially extra staff members were on duty at each site to ensure that all COVID safe procedures were being carried out safely. Since then limited numbers have been permitted to also enjoy indoor play activities. Officers are currently looking to enable more young people to safely take part in the indoor activities so they can continue to enjoy the service during the winter months.
8. In addition the council delivered a variety of activities and events as part of the 'Summer of Play' programme which recognised that children and

young people needed the opportunity to have fun and relax, after what has been an especially stressful year for many. This was a cross departmental collaborative project with key highlights including innovative arts, craft and creative workshops, gardening and plant-based workshops, sports ranging from horse riding and paddle boarding to inclusive yoga and skateboarding. The Summer of Play working group will mobilise ahead of Easter 2022; following that the group will work together in the build up to summer 2022.

9. The Positive Future for Young People Fund (PFYPF) is the council's youth service grants programme for organisations to deliver activities for young people. The PFYPF programme consists of £1,085,994 over two years. Feedback from consultation with almost 400 young people has shaped the grants activities criteria. Young people were also included in the grant allocation process. All these activities and services will go live in April 2022 and officers will ensure that the conditions of grants will include requirements that the providers are able to mobilise their programmes to online format if any new lockdowns come into force.
10. In addition officers have been working on developing a new Youth Services Digital Hub which will be easily accessible and ensure the rapid provision of comprehensive, up to date and relevant information about activities and services for young people and their families. The new Digital Hub will create clearer pathways for young people to access information around careers advice, emotional wellbeing and personal development. A specialist supplier has been appointed and work is now underway to create the portal.

Recommendation Two – The police and criminal justice system must develop a clear plan to combat stigmatisation of communities during the Covid-19 crisis.

11. The Southwark Stands Together (SST) programme includes a borough plan commitment for the council to 'work with the police and our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to strengthen trust in policing'. The SST annual report, presented at the Cabinet meeting of 13 July 2021, provided a substantive update in relation to a comprehensive plan of activities under this workstream. Activities include the delivery of cultural awareness sessions to existing and new police officers, the creation of pilot Police Encounter Panels to enhance scrutiny of police stop and search in the borough through providing an opportunity for young people with lived experience to support improvements in future experiences of stop and search arrangements, and the establishment of a Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) who, to date, have facilitated joint events with the police to tackle issues such as stop search and the impact this has had on young people in the borough. Workstream interventions continue to be delivered and are supporting the reduction of stigmatisation of communities in the borough.

Recommendation Three - The council and NHS closely track vaccine take up across cohorts with lowest take up and highest risk, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities and people with lower social economic status, and take effective action to increase take-up.

This ought to include addressing the linguistic, cultural and digital barriers to accessing information. The council and NHS should work with all relevant bodies, including faith and community groups, to identify effective channels to disseminate information and provide support.

12. The council closely tracks uptake across all risk groups, ethnicities and geography and we use this intelligence to inform who and where to target outreach and pop-ups, provision of clinics and projects and programmes that aim to improve uptake.
13. The council are addressing the digital barrier to vaccine communications by using non-digital channels. These include: comprehensive vaccine information in Southwark Life magazine (delivered to every home in the borough), joining London-wide billboard advertising campaigns, door-to-door letters to promote local vaccine pop-up clinics, sharing key messages with Covid ambassadors to share in their communities and more widely.
14. The council are addressing cultural and linguistic barriers by translating materials for particular languages as required and sharing nationally-available translated materials as required. We are also using community leaders to help disseminate key messages (i.e. faith leaders), and the council has also run focus groups with community leaders from the Black and Asian Minority Ethnic communities.
15. The council is working with local NHS organisations, Community Southwark, the voluntary sector, businesses, faith leaders, community groups to disseminate key messages and identify the best channels to communicate.

Recommendation Four - The commission recommends that the Council reiterate that the COVID-19 vaccines are offered to everyone in the UK, and reassures that this includes undocumented migrants, free of charge and safe from police or immigration. This includes people who have overstayed their visas, and those on short-term visas who have failed to leave or those who have arrived into the UK without visa.

To ensure everyone can access the COVID-19 vaccination no matter what their immigration status, the Council should work with local charities, local institutions and doctors to set up pop-up clinics in the community to ensure ease of access to the vaccine and offer advice in a number of languages.

The commission recognises that the Cabinet is making efforts to implement the stated above with the example of the walk-in vaccines at Millwall Football Club with no identification needed. To make this effective there must be greater outreach to the undocumented community whilst also sound reassurance that no details or identity will be passed on to either the police or immigration bodies to create a safe space for those who wish to attend.

16. The council has consistently communicated that to get a vaccine you don't need proof of address, NHS number or immigration status in order to get a vaccine and we will continue to do so.
17. The council has worked with the NHS to create a number of pop-up vaccine clinics which were advertised locally, alongside larger and permanent vaccine clinics at Guys and St Thomas and other locations in the borough.
18. The council and NHS are working to ensure the COVID vaccination is offered to people arriving into Initial Accommodation Centres and Bridging Hotels.

Recommendation Five – The council and NHS ought to develop a joint plan to reverse the trend of overrepresentation of Black, and Minority Ethnic people in crisis, forensic care and the criminal justice system through preventative work, a focus on race equality and by facilitating better access to mental health care in the community.

19. The new Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24 references the health inequalities faced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people and a need for a review of how local health and care organisations treat them to enable more effective services that are responsive to their needs, and the need for the system to be proactively anti-racist. There are 16 work streams for the 2021-24 Strategy and this recommendation aligns with a number of them. The recommendation will now be referred for consideration as part of the Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24 work programmes.

Recommendation Six –The Children & Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Joint Working Group:

- **Expand stakeholders and the collection of data on different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups' usage of mental health services to the work that Southwark and the NHS funds in schools. As well as young offending, forensic and crisis care, in order to enable specific research and actions to address overrepresentation in forensic and crisis care and underrepresentation in community based and CAMHS mental health service provision.**

- **Encourage service providers to conduct engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to ensure therapies are culturally appropriate and geographically accessible, and provide better and more equitable access to talking therapies according to local need and local demographics.**
20. As presented to the Commission, the Emotional wellbeing and mental health working group established an Equalities Task and Finish Group to carry out an audit across providers in Southwark (Kooth, GroundWork, SLAM and Council in-house clinical team).
21. Since the presentation, the work of the group has led to contract reporting being benchmarked against ethnicity population data for Children's Social Care and School Age Population data for Groundwork London (The Nest) and SLAM. SLAMs comparison includes the Youth Offending Services, Adolescent CAMHS, under 5's, Children Looked After (Carelink) and crisis care (i.e. A+E attendances and follow up support). Tracking of the data informs the actions taken by the working group to improve equity of access.
22. The audit found a range of provider lead activity was underway including but not limited to:
- Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework is being implemented (SLAM)
 - Equality & Diversity training is mandatory for all staff
 - Diversity champions are being identified from within the workforce
 - Access to interpreters is generally good
 - Specific staffing placement programmes to encourage applicants from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups are being introduced
23. Through Partnership Southwark providers are sharing the feedback that they receive from all communities and specifically feedback from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to inform practice and commissioning. Examples include the following:
- SLAM have carried out [South London Listens](#) with Citizen UK
 - The Nest have 21 service users involved in improving service delivery in its first year
 - SaferLondon (Child Sexual Abuse emotional support service) have secured additional funding from MOPAC to improve the quality of support for children and young people from Black and other minority communities
 - PACT continue to use a co-production approach to continually improve service design

Recommendation Seven -The commission is keen to see the work by SLAM develop and to deliver on the outcome of increasing uptake of CAMHS services and improvement in meeting the unmet mental

health needs of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people. The commission would like to see a particular focus on the last approach; CAMHS working with partners, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community groups (including Latin American and European immigrant communities) to develop new ways of working in prevention and early help approaches across our communities. A report back on progress is requested in 6 months' time.

24. One of the key developments has been the creation of an approach for the first introduction of the national Mental Health Support Teams in Southwark schools which transfers the connection from via referral to the proactive reach directly into and with selected schools. In addition to Harold point on the work MHST will be doing to make access to mental health support from school easier, Southwark CAMHS is also engaged in implementing the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF). This work aims to develop organisational competencies and Southwark is focusing on co-learning and developing opportunities to learn more about different cultures and experiences Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities share in regards to mental health.
25. Southwark CAMHS is actively advertising all recruitment vacancies via the Black and Asian therapy network to attract a more representative field of applicants.
26. The service has continued the work they had started with partners on a Race and Culture Positive Practice audit and review the action plan on a monthly basis.

Recommendation Eight - The commission would urge the NHS CCG to ensure that the Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) are diverse, that there is monitoring of the demographics of the young people they work with to ensure equal access that Mental Health nurses have an understanding of racism, and the role includes addressing the wider social issues that many young people are facing.

27. Through an expert-led CPD and training offer for schools, more than 300 Mental Health First Aiders from a diversity of backgrounds in over 90 schools across Southwark have been trained. Due to the ad hoc nature of MHFA contacts, client data is not captured. However, the MHFA training focuses on equality and culturally competent practice.

Recommendation Nine - The Health and Wellbeing Board monitor the diversity of its members and take action to address any lack of diversity

28. Health and Wellbeing Boards are a statutory forum where political, clinical, professional and community leaders from across the care and health system come together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities.

29. The Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board is currently undergoing a review of its Terms of Reference alongside a series of development sessions for Board members.
30. This recommendation will now be implemented as part of this review in the New Year.

Recommendation Ten - A network of Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic young people, and community groups are developed to inform the work of the Children & Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Joint Working Group / Health and Wellbeing Board. This ought to be diverse and include Latin American, Eastern European, mixed heritage and other minority groups, paying particular attention to communities with poorer mental health outcomes and experiencing socio- economic disadvantage.

31. Southwark will launch an equalities stakeholder reference group, inclusive of VCS providers who have direct and specialist experience of working with groups at increased risk of poor mental health and seldom heard groups. The role of the group will be to inform the delivery of the local action plan.
32. This will build on grass root community programmes such as Parents and Communities Together (PACT) which has been running co-produced, community-based groups for English and Spanish-speaking mums in the London Borough of Southwark. MumSpace and Espacio Mama Mothers going to MumSpace and Espacio Mama reported an overall improvement in their mental health and their child's development. The improvement in Spanish-speaking mothers' anxiety levels were found to be statistically significant. English-speaking mums also showed an increase in their parenting and social capital/integration scores. The Book sharing intervention led to significant improvements in children's language development.

Recommendation Eleven - Adopt a Race Equality Framework in the delivery of Southwark 100% universal reach target. This calls for a broader piece of work, with Black, Asian and a broad range of Minority Ethnic communities, to address the causes of mental ill health

33. A Strategy Board is being established as the body tasked with the strategic management of the Southwark Stands Together Programme and the Equality Framework within Southward Council. It will oversee the delivery of these equality programmes as well as monitoring progress and reporting performance to Members on a regular basis. It will ensure that equality and diversity principles are fully embedded in everything that the Council does and work towards ensuring the Council truly reflects the diversity of the borough community in its staff and it's service delivery meets the needs of all service users inclusively.

34. The Strategy Board is responsible for supporting the Council and the Members to fulfil their Equality obligations, and in particular race equality obligations, under the equality legislation. As the Strategy Board will be overseeing both the SST and Equality Framework, it will ensure that focus is not lost on either of these programmes.

Policy framework implications

35. Southwark's Borough Plan 2020 - 2022 provides the Council's response to COVID-19 and presents commitments towards the following areas:
- i. Keeping Southwark safe during COVID-19
 - ii. Tackling health inequalities
 - iii. Southwark Together
 - iv. A great start in life
 - v. Tackling the Climate emergency
 - vi. Thriving neighbourhoods
 - vii. A green and inclusive economy
 - viii. Homes for all
36. The proposed and current actions in response to the recommendations outlined in this report are in keeping with the commitments in the Borough Plan.
37. In addition, the Southwark Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) is currently being refreshed and presents additional opportunities to have a strengthened, system-wide approach to tackling health inequalities in Southwark.
38. The priorities within the JHWS are:
- i. Ensure the best start in life for every child
 - ii. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
 - iii. Create fair employment and good work for all
 - iv. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
 - v. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
 - vi. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
 - vii. Integration of health and social care

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

39. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, lays out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies to consider all individuals when shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to

eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. The Council works closely with stakeholders and partners who collectively are committed to upholding the responsibilities towards advocating the Public Sector Equality Duty and complying with the Equalities Act 2010. The PSED enables public bodies to consider the diverse needs of groups and have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

40. The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on children and families who have a lower socio-economic status. The effects of poverty, racism, discrimination and isolation have all been exacerbated, with higher death rates among people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and among people living in deprived areas. Implementation of the responses within this report will impact positively in addressing these inequalities.

Health impact statement

41. The combination of existing structural inequalities and the unequal impacts of the pandemic has meant that those whose mental health was at greatest risk prior to Covid-19 are now highly likely to be adversely affected by the longer term impacts of the pandemic. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young people are among those who are at increased risk within Southwark.
42. It is proposed that the implementation of these recommendations will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children and young people, and will contribute to narrowing the gap in inequality that currently exists.

Climate change implications

43. A number of actions against the recommendations are virtual in their delivery which will impact positively on climate change targets.

Resource implications

44. There will be additional resource implications in the implementation of some of the recommendations, and these will be costed by the lead organisation/department. Others are already accounted for within existing budgets or through staff resource.

Legal/Financial implications

45. Not applicable.

Consultation

46. Not applicable.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**Head of Procurement**

47. Not applicable.

Director of Law and Governance

48. Not applicable.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

49. Not applicable.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet agenda 14 September 2021	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Paula.thornton@southwark.gov.uk
Link: (please copy and paste into browser): https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s101277/Appendix%20A%20MH%20CYP%20Black%20Asian%20and%20Minority%20Ethnic%20scrutiny%20review.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Evelyn Akoto, Health and Wellbeing	
Lead Officer	Caroline Bruce, Strategic Director of Environment & Leisure	
Report Author	Sangeeta Leahy, Director of Public Health	
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CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
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Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
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