

Item No. 6.	Classification: Open	Date: 24 April 2023	Meeting Name: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Report title:		Update on council response to the recommendations made in the Healthwatch report on LGBTQ+ community	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Jessica Leech, Community Engagement Manager	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the content of the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. In July 2019 Healthwatch Southwark produced a report following engagement with the local LGBTQ+ community on the needs, experiences and aspirations of this community. The report was jointly produced by Healthwatch Southwark and the Southwark LGBT Network. A survey that informed the report was hosted on the council's consultation hub.
3. Many of the recommendations from this work focused on health and social care outcomes, but were linked to the wider wellbeing of the community and how social activity contributes to this.
4. The key recommendation for the council focused on the delivery of a JSNA to dig deeper into the challenges and needs of this community and this work to act as a launch pad for other policy work.
5. The specific council focused recommendations were:
 - Southwark Council should undertake a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the LGBTQ+ people of the borough. This should include the experiences of further minorities within the LGBTQ+ communities, including specific gender identities and sexualities, older, disabled and BAME people. Topics of social isolation and loneliness could also be considered.
 - The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment should then form a point of reference for future service developments, including but not limited

to: Southwark LGBTQ+ Community Consultation 2018-2019 - the implementation of the Lambeth, Southwark & Lewisham Sexual Health Strategy - the implementation of the Southwark Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy - the implementation of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Transformation Plan - the development of social prescribing initiatives.

- The findings of this report should be considered as part of the new Southwark Loneliness Strategy and in assessments of the needs of carers.
- Particularly for sexual health and mental health, and when responding to inequalities highlighted in improving service data, commissioners should be mindful of the fact that 71% of respondents to this survey felt there was a need for LGBTQ+ specific services.
- Updates are sought around current provision of further/refresher training and guidance on good practice in topics such as gender transition, PReP, fertility options and rights, and LGBTQ+ specific sexual and mental health concerns.
- Residents should be made aware of the role of Southwark Council's LGBTQ+ staff network, which, as well as supporting staff, aims to ensure that they act appropriately towards local residents, and explores where policies are discriminatory.
- The Mayor of London's LGBTQ+ Venue Charter should be well promoted among local venues. This includes display of a rainbow flag symbol, appropriate marketing, disabled access, consideration of gender neutral toilets, welcoming staff and security personnel, and LGBTQ+ focused programming. Southwark Council could consider highlighting organisations which have signed up to the charter in local publications.
- Southwark Council should investigate and address barriers to new LGBTQ+ venues or events in the borough, particularly in the context of regeneration programmes. Survey respondents highlighted a wish to allow events and ideas to be coproduced by the diverse LGBTQ+ community, and include daytime and alcohol-free activities.
- Planning and licensing departments in Southwark Council should ensure that gender neutral toilet facilities are included in new public venues.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION/Updates

JSNA Public Health lead

6. The work on JSNA began in 2019 but was not completed due to the pandemic. However Public health have produced a population profile of our LGBTQI+ residents based on new data from the Census 2021. The latest report is attached. Note that this new data contains more information about our transgender community than we have held before.

7. There are plans to follow this with a more detailed health needs assessment this year following the recent release of the more detailed census. This needs assessment will include engagement with local residents.

Loneliness strategy - Public Health lead

8. The report identified loneliness and isolation as key challenges for the community and wished to see the needs of the LBG+ community reflected in any action plans that developed. The current strategy does this: <https://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s88179/Appendix%201%20loneliness%20strategy.pdf>.
9. Stakeholder engagement and monitoring of the action plan for the loneliness strategy was paused due to Covid, and was not restarted fully before the policy officer in that post left the council. Officers have prioritised supporting the suicide prevention strategy and mental health first aid while that post is filled, but this will form part of the new mental health policy officer's work from May.

Sexual Health – Public Health lead

10. Through greater investment from central government the council has been able to increase support for HIV PreP implementation by £350K (2021).
11. Colleagues in SE London ICS have been working on a number of the recommendations and for example all GP surgeries are now safe spaces, however we are waiting for more information from the team about progress on the issues concerned.
12. It should be noted that the period from February 2020 until March 2022 our health colleagues were focused on addressing issues arising from the pandemic.

Planning - Sustainable Growth Lead

13. There is no current policy on gender neutral toilets in new facilities or developments. Mapping existing LBG+ social spaces as part of a review of social infrastructure in Southwark has not taken place but could be included in current work on town centres.

Community investment

14. The report talked about the closer working of the staff network and resident community, as a means of raising awareness among those who deliver services, to improve the experiences of those who are part of the LBG+ community. The LGBTQ Staff Network was officially re-launched in February during LGBTQ+ History month, where members attended different Southwark offices to promote the network and encourage staff to join up.

The network now meets monthly to discuss key issues staff are facing, and is regularly running events to celebrate key LGBTQ+ events in the Diversity and Inclusion Calendar.

15. One of the ideas explored was to install rainbow crossings in each area. Unfortunately this is no longer recommended or funded by TfL as a consequence of the negative impact this type of crossing potentially has on people with some disabilities.
16. The common purpose grants supports Opening Doors who deliver services to our older LBG+ communities, and we are investing over £20K a year in this organisation. Opening Doors is the biggest organization providing information and advice services for LGBT+ communities nationally.
17. The council also funds METRO to provide services for our LGBTQ+ young people, investing over £26K in these services (2021/2022).

Policy framework implications

18. The work to ensure the needs of the LBG+ community are met within our overall service delivery is an essential part of our delivery of the equality framework.
19. It is a timely moment to review this report and ensure its content is addressed or reflected in our work across the council as we begin to pick up streams of work paused as we have responded to the various impacts of the pandemic.

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

20. This report is an update on the Healthwatch report 2019. The Healthwatch report followed engagement with local LGBTQ+ communities and was designed to maximise opportunities to reach out to local residents and seldom-heard communities, and develop a better understanding of health and social care needs. To develop a current understanding of the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in the borough, the Southwark LGBTQ+ Consultation was launched. The aims of this project were to:
 - Develop better relationships with organisations that provide services for or support LGBT+ people,
 - Highlight the impact/extent of known inequalities faced by LGBTQ+ people in Southwark,
 - Gain intelligence on the health and social care needs of LGBTQ+ people in Southwark, and
 - Include local residents in a project that could influence decision making around how mainstream and LGBTQ+ organisations deliver services.
21. The survey questions were community-led and supplemented by a number of open meetings.

Resource implications

22. None at this point.

Legal implications

23. None.

Financial implications

24. None.

Consultation

25. None since the original report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Healthwatch report	https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s89947/Appendix%20%20Southwark%20LGBTQ%20Community%20Consultation%202018-19.pdf	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s89947/Appendix%20%20Southwark%20LGBTQ%20Community%20Consultation%202018-19.pdf		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Census data relating to LGBTQ+ community

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities	
Report Author	Jessica Leech, Community Engagement Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	14 April 2023	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Scrutiny Team	14 April 2023	