Dear North-West Colleagues,

Thank you for joining us for the first Local Community Partnership (LCP) event of 2024. It was lovely to have so many of you in attendance and to be in Norbury Library as a excellent venue. Thank you to our Co-chairs, Janet and Paul, for hosting and to Community Builder, Norman Mine, for assisting the facilitation, helping to increase engagement and for inviting Allan, our own wonderful Barista! For more information on Norbury Library and events / hire information click [here.](https://www.croydon.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-culture/libraries/find-your-library/norbury-library)

It was an action-packed agenda covering the following updates; **Local Community Partnerships, Libraries, Public Protection Order, Food Banks, Community Hub update and a Locality update.**

**Local Community Partnerships**

 The work of the Local Community Partnerships meetings is anchored in partnership work from their conception. They came out of the joining of the ‘Healthy Communities Together’ program and the ‘One Croydon Alliance’. Crisis support throughout the pandemic showed the strength of partnership working, joining up services and empowering people to take their health into their own hands. GP services, hospitals, social work and mental health interventions needed to join forces to provide a holistic, community-led and strengths-based approach to health and well-being. This is where the formation and growth of the Local Community Partnerships has thrived, with innovative, preventative work being done, using local assets to meet self-identified priorities.

The first partnerships for each locality to address local issues have formed and the first wave of funding from the Localities Commissioning Fund has been released. The key issues identified for the North-West locality include heating and eating, mental health and wellbeing and the need for intergenerational activities and opportunities that have mutual benefits for both the older and younger population. The role of an **Intergenerational Youth Worker** has been created to achieve positive outcomes in this area.

Alongside this, **Action Groups** are being formed to work on each priority as much of the essential work of LCPs needs to take place between the quarterly meetings. To further this see the need for Smaller pots of ‘seed funding’ are also being made available to grassroots, community groups and individuals to fund local initiatives.

It is also good to see that the key themes of the **LCP Community Plans**, now directly **align with the borough-wide Health and Wellbeing Strategy** that is currently being refreshed and that will then be in place for the next five years. Thank you to all LCP members who took part in the consultation process with the Council’s Public Health team.

**Libraries**

Croydon’s libraries are undergoing a restructuring. Most Libraries are only open 2/3 days a week and part of the weekend. The staff team that staffs the library is small and often travels across sites to make the service function with minimal opening hours. Currently Croydon Council seek to close four libraries at Bradmore Green, Broad Green, Shirley and Sanderstead. By closing these four sites the Council’s aim is to help resource the other libraries to be more functional and community lending. The library team are also working on a library ‘Outreach’ service taking the services of the library into the community. The view is that the libraries that remain open are becoming community spaces that are thriving hubs of activities in the communities they serve. The consultation concerning libraries closes on the 19th April, please follow the [link](https://www.getinvolved.croydon.gov.uk/libraries-services-consultation) to have your say. For questions and more information please email stephanie.wilson@croydon.gov.uk

**Public Protection Order**

We are grateful to have our colleagues from the Police join us at so many of these meetings. We heard that the Police are waiting for a ‘thumbs-up’ from the Council to start ruling out the Public Protection Order. Officers are trained and concerns raised such as anti-social behaviour and street-drinking are to be addressed. A suggestion was made that Police and residents, working in partnership, can go around local businesses and explain the Public Protection Order and how it operates to strengthen a feeling of safety for all in the community.

Communication with the police was raised in the light of the closure of many police stations. A reminder was given that 101 is the number to contact for non-emergency concerns. The Safer Neighbourhoods Team have a regular newsletter to connect to the community. Police teams have local social media pages that you can directly contact for your area. It was suggested to improve on this perhaps the Police and residents' associations can partner together in mutual information sharing. Alternatively Ward Panel meetings are a great place to build relationships and discuss concerns. [Here](https://croydoncc.wordpress.com/tag/ward-panel-meeting/) for more information on your local ward panel meeting and connecting with the Police [here.](https://www.croydon.gov.uk/community-and-safety/safety/crime-and-antisocial-behaviour/police-safer-neighbourhood-teams)

**Food Banks**

There are currently over 52 food poverty interventions across Croydon, use of these services is at an all-time high and donations remain at an all-time low. ‘Croydon Cares’ is an initiative that assists through the partnership of volunteers, supermarkets and collection points. This partnership redistributes food resources into the food stops around the borough, meeting basic needs in the current cost-of-living crisis. Other items that are needed include clothes, toys and hygiene products. For more information [here.](https://cvalive.org.uk/news/2022-news-items/croydoncares-winter-campaign/)

**‘SWAN’** is a ‘basic essentials’ charity in this locality with a Community Hub located at 31 Whitehorse Road, CR0 2JH. It is open Mondays and Wednesdays. They are currently providing over 100 meals funded by the community. The need for queue management and increased risk of violence towards the volunteers raises safeguarding concerns. They want the support of Local Police to help manage so they can continue their good work. More information on [Swan](https://www.swanlondon.org/).

**Community Hub Update**

Brigstock Road Hub sees 40/50 people a week. The purpose of the hub was to provide light touch support through strengths-based conversations and yet many are presenting with crisis situations. There is a need to connect resources, housing links and helplines to strengthen support. Creative workshops have been introduced with the view to encouraging residents to eventually lead on those workshops and so far there has been great feedback.

**Locality Updates**

 The **Intergenerational Youth Worker**, Taylia, is now in post and we heard an update of her work. In a recent survey 80% of young people stated they would be keen to participate in intergenerational activities. They identified the need for initiatives on the themes of career development, finances, property and creativity.

**ACTION** - **South Norwood Community Kitchen** have a pilot program with young people.

Young people also identified the need for initiatives that share experience/skills that are mutually beneficial, as well as paid ‘work experience.’ Taylia is looking to partner with businesses in the Thornton Heath locality.

**ACTION** – LCP members to get in touch with Taylia with suggestions about local businesses who could become potential partners for the intergenerational work: email:taylia@reachinghigher.org.uk

**Communication** has been a key theme across the localities. Each LCP has received a budget to fund ways of promoting LCP meetings in their areas. This locality will spend money on Croydon FM to promote the LCPs and Hubs, together with billboards in the local area and leaflets for residents who are not digitally connected.

The question of ‘How do we move **Mental Health** forward?’ was asked. Initial suggestions included utilizing some of the 1000 Mental Health First Aiders that have been trained in Croydon. Furthermore, groups and opportunities that maintain or help residents to regain good mental health in the North-West locality could be mapped to see where the rich assets and the gaps are.

**ACTION** – Andrew Slegg to liaise with the North-West Co-Chairs about the mapping work being done in the SW Locality

Kooth’s representative, Cassim, suggested a monthly steering group to co-ordinate the work focusing on Younger People. Cassim has access to data that can assist in shaping initiatives for young people. He can provide a generalized outline of themes that are important to young people such as ‘Money’ or ‘Running Away.’ A big issue for the upper end of Primary school is children refusing to go to school. The need for parents to be involved in issues that young people face, as well as ethnic minority representation in young people's services are among top priorities.

**ACTION** - To partner and join a steering group to improve the support offered to young people email : ckaweesa@kooth.com

Thank you for such a well-attended and productive meeting. Please note that the **next meeting will be in the evening**, at **6-8pm on Wednesday 5th June**, as we try to reach new voices, particularly those of residents who can’t attend LCP meetings during the day as they are working. Please don’t forget to register for this meeting via [Eventbrite](https://cvalive.org.uk/calendar/item/51093210) to help us with our catering provisions.

We look forward to seeing you then.

Warm Wishes- Janet, Paul, Norman, Sarah and Andrew

*With thanks to Chloe Smith for the notes.*

c/o Sarah Burns

Director of Communities

Mob: 07540 720106

Email: sarah.burns@cvalive.org.uk

CVA Resource Centre

82 London Road, CR0 2TB