

Leaders' Committee

Thrive LDN

Item no: 6

Report by: Clive Grimshaw **Job title:** Strategic Lead for Health and Social Care
Date: 8 December 2020
Contact Officer: Katie Harrison
Telephone: 2027934 9972 **Email:** Katie.harrison@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Summary In July 2017, the Mayor of London launched Thrive LDN as a citywide movement to ensure all Londoners have an equal opportunity for good mental health and wellbeing.

Recommendations Leaders' Committee is asked to:

1. Note the activity being undertaken by Thrive LDN prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic
2. To discuss and comment on the future priorities outlined, both over the next three to six months and longer-term

Thrive LDN

Background

1. In July 2017, the Mayor of London launched Thrive LDN as a citywide movement to ensure all Londoners have an equal opportunity for good mental health and wellbeing. Thrive LDN is led by the London Health Board, in partnership with Greater London Authority, the NHS in London, Public Health England (London Region) and London Councils.
2. London local government has been embedded within the governance of the programme from the outset, and the involvement of London local government leaders in shaping the programme has been fostered at all levels from engagement via the London Health Board to local-level partnerships. Local government leaders also occupy formal roles within the governance of Thrive LDN; Mayor Philip Glanville and Cllr Jacqui Dyer MBE act as co-leads of the programme and the Thrive LDN Advisory Group is Chaired by Paul Najsarek, Chief Executive of Ealing Council.
3. Thrive LDN's approach is to effectively advance social change through a blend of bottom-up and top-down initiatives. In practice this means working across a network of organisations in the London system to generate scalable and sustainable improvements for Londoners. As a participation-driven partnership, Thrive LDN support a community of individuals and organisations from across the health and care system and the voluntary and community sectors who can mobilise this transformation.
4. Since March 2020, Thrive LDN has also been coordinating the public mental health response to the coronavirus pandemic on behalf of Public Health England London and wider partners, with the aim of ensuring London's diverse communities have the strength and resilience to cope with and overcome unprecedented events. Thrive LDN was ideally placed to lead the coordination and has utilised their existing resources and partnerships to create, scale and step up activities to meet the evolving mental health needs of Londoners during the pandemic.
5. This report describes –
 - The ongoing activity of Thrive LDN, including the public mental health response to the Covid-19 pandemic

- The direction of travel for the future mental health response and recovery work in London, and wider strategic priorities
- Opportunities for continued borough engagement with the Thrive LDN programme

Thrive LDN programme pre-Covid-19

6. Before Covid-19 reached London, Thrive LDN had done quite extensive engagement with partners, to agree Thrive LDN's strategic priorities and programme for 2020/21. Some activities had to be paused during the first half of 2020/21, however, all planned activities are now delivering in addition to the Covid-19 response and recovery work detailed below. Main activities –

7. Young Londoners' mental health:

- The Youth Mental Health First Aid programme is on track to train a Youth Mental Health First Aider in every school, college and university in London, along with over 2,000 other youth settings by July 2021, the programme is currently operating in every London borough, and is carried out with the support of local authority partners who are promoting this training to schools and colleges.
- Facilitation of a young Londoner-led festival to mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October. More than 100 young people were involved in developing and delivering the festival programme and more than 1,000 people accessed the range of performances, panel discussions, workshops and resources on the day.
- In partnership with Team London, the Young London Inspired grants scheme to award grants to create volunteering and social action projects with and for young Londoners has resumed.
- A further education mental health and wellbeing needs assessment has been completed and a higher education mental health and wellbeing needs assessment is due to be completed in January 2021.

8. Right to Thrive:

- Right to Thrive is Thrive LDN's ongoing commitment to celebrate and protect diversity in London, especially for those at higher risk of unfair treatment based on their identity, beliefs or social class, and encompasses a range of

projects, activities and events co-developed with Londoners from disadvantaged groups.

- The Right to Thrive grants scheme has awarded £200,000 in the past nine months to support 24 community-led mental health projects developed with and for intersectional and marginalised groups in London.

9. Suicide Prevention:

- Thrive LDN is the Regional Lead for Suicide Prevention on behalf of NHS London and has continued to facilitate multi-agency working across London regionally, sub-regionally and locally.
- The existing Thrive LDN Suicide Prevention Information Sharing Hub is being used regularly by 30 out of 33 London local authorities (including the City of London) and the expansion to sharing information on attempted suicides and self-harm is planned for early 2021.
- Suicide Awareness training for schools, colleges and universities has resumed and is on track to have delivered in every London borough by July 2021, this programme is carried out with the support of borough officers.

10. Communications and Campaigns:

- Delivery of several regional, sub-regional and local public mental health campaigns. Namely, the #ZeroSuicideLDN campaign in partnership with the Mayor of London and Zero Suicide Alliance, which has seen over 160,000 Londoners complete free, online Suicide Prevention training in the past 12 months.
- Thrive LDN has a two-year partnership with Rethink Mental Health and Inside Job Productions to pilot new approaches to the production of mental health information in prisons, with successful approaches being rolled out over two years to all 14 prisons within the Greater London Region.

11. Academic and international partnerships:

- Thrive LDN has continued to support academic and international partnerships to share learning and best practice. Most notably, through partnering with King's College London's Centre for Society and Mental Health and the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership.

Coordinating the public mental health response to Covid-19

12. Thrive LDN's public mental health response to Covid-19 is composed of four main functions –

- **Coordination:** Thrive LDN provides a coordination function across regional, sub-regional and local partners. In a formal sense, this is through established governance arrangements, namely the Thrive LDN Advisory Group, and through close working with the Strategic Coordination Group. More broadly, Thrive LDN work with their existing resources and partnerships to create, scale and step up various activities to meet the evolving mental health needs of Londoners during the pandemic.
- **Research and Community Insights:** Thrive LDN publishes regular working papers, briefings and guidance summarising the known impact of Covid-19 on Londoners' mental health and wellbeing and suggested actions to address immediate and anticipated future needs.
- To improve the representativeness and inclusiveness of available information, Thrive LDN has an ongoing community engagement and participatory action research project to understand more about the experiences of Londoners who entered the pandemic from positions of disadvantage. To date, Thrive LDN has worked with over 200 community groups and listened to over 10,000 Londoners from 20 disproportionately at risk groups. Whilst this work is ongoing, an initial summary of findings and suggested actions (the 'Thrive Together' report) was published at the London Health Board meeting on 20 October.
- **Communications and Campaigns:** Thrive LDN develop and distribute a weekly Communications and Digital Communications Toolkits with agreed public mental health messaging. The Toolkit is well used across all areas of the health and care system. Thrive LDN has also developed targeted communications and campaigns projects to address language, cultural and structural barriers to accessing mental health information, advice and support.

13. Some key achievements of Thrive LDN's public mental health response are –

- In partnership with London Councils and borough community support hubs, Thrive LDN printed and distributed 96,000 mental health resources to vulnerable Londoners, particularly targeting non-digitally active Londoners.

- In partnership with the Mayor of London and Doctors of the World, Thrive LDN developed mental health information and guidance available in 30 languages.
- In partnership with Transport for London (TfL), Thrive LDN delivered a mental health poster campaign across the entire TfL network.
- Thrive LDN developed a coordinated bereavement support plan and suicide prevention plan with key partners.
- In partnership with the Digital Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Team and IAPT Clinicians, Thrive LDN developed the 'Coping Well During Covid' and 'Keeping Well for Health and Care Workers' webinar series.
- In partnership with GLA Growth Hub, Thrive LDN develop a mental health training and support resource for GLA Growth Hub Advisors to support them with challenging conversations they were having with employers and business owners in London.
- Thrive LDN supported Good Thinking, London's digital mental wellbeing service, to develop a comprehensive digital mental health and wellbeing offer for Londoners.

Support for partners during future Covid-19 management

14. Towards the end of October and to coincide with the announcement of a second national lockdown, Thrive LDN was asked by local government colleagues to undertake an initial, rapid assessment of public mental health risks over the next three to six months and to develop an outline public mental health plan. The plan has since been endorsed by the Strategic Coordination Group and included in London's asks of the Secretary of State letter sent on the 13 November 2020.
15. Existing activities outlined above will continue. In addition, Thrive LDN has identified several priorities. Key activities include –
 - **Research and Community Insights:** In addition to the work underway, Thrive LDN will undertake a 'prediction and prevention' exercise to understand potential scenarios over the next three to six months and develop plans to mitigate mental health risks. As much as possible, this will be inclusive of wider issues than Covid-19 affecting Londoners' mental health and wellbeing.
 - **Right to Thrive:** Thrive LDN is currently expanding their Right to Thrive programme to offer additional support and development opportunities to

grassroots groups to support them to build their resilience for the coming months.

- **Resilience:** Evidence shows a clear relationship between resilience and coping during the pandemic. Thrive LDN is currently mobilising a new Resilience programme across London. This will include a resilience and social connectedness promotion campaign, a mental wellbeing and resilience promotion programme, an emotional resilience programme and a parenting support programme. All programmes are intended to build on work already commissioned locally and will be informed by boroughs and voluntary and community sector organisations already operating in this space.
- **Enhanced support for those struggling financially:** Debt is one of the best evidenced risk factors for poor mental health and suicide. In partnership with Trussell Trust, Debt Free London and London Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs), Thrive LDN is developing targeted mental health and suicide prevention outreach to those struggling financially. The project will see mental health advice and debt advice resources distributed to all London food banks and other community hubs.
- **Suicide Prevention:** Thrive LDN was awarded additional funding from ADPH London, as part of the Sector-led Improvement programme, to develop additional support for those bereaved by suicide. This project is being developed with the pandemic in mind and a 'Support after sudden bereavement during the Covid-19 pandemic' Toolkit was published at the end of November.

Longer-term strategic priorities

16. Business Planning for 2021/22 is underway. Thrive LDN will continue to deliver the public mental health response to the pandemic for as long as is needed, however there are some additional emerging strategic priorities for next financial year –

- **Mental Health Recovery Mission:** This work is being led by Greater London Authority, with Thrive LDN part of the development group. Thrive LDN will continue to support the development of the mental health recovery mission over the next few months and consider their role in delivering the mission, as appropriate.

- **Responding to Community Insights:** More broadly, Thrive LDN is committed to continuing to engage with Londoners across the city and co-develop projects and activities in response to insights shared.
- Overall findings thus far indicate that, for many communities across London, the coronavirus pandemic is seen as the latest crisis event in a crisis trend – a steadily worsening series of situations disadvantaged communities across London face. This is against a backdrop of vital conditions for wellbeing and resilience being eroded over time and a fear for what’s to come – be that a worsening pandemic, winter challenges, uncertainty over income and employment or difficulties in departing the EU on 31st December.
- Findings also illustrate a general sense of loss across all aspects of many Londoners’ lives: loss of loved ones, employment, relationships, homes, education and wider opportunities. However, there is also a definite theme of hope. Communities disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic, who already experienced poorer social, economic and health outcomes, identified the significance of family and support structures, and the support offered by wider community and faith groups. Early findings show a clear relationship between resilience and coping with uncertainty, and the power of relationships, collectivising, and social networks.
- Thrive LDN is working with communities across London to develop longer-term partnerships, projects and activities across eight themes: (1) Strengthen community; (2) Address discrimination; (3) Balance uncertainty for the future; (4) Financial security; (5) Value family and support structures; (6) Digital inclusion; (7) Improve access to information, advice and support and (8) Commit to delivering change with Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

Opportunities for borough engagement

17. As a participation-driven partnership, Thrive LDN activities and programmes are delivered with and through boroughs as well as a community of individuals and organisations from across the health and care system and the voluntary and community sectors.
18. Thrive LDN has strong relationships with London boroughs and is committed to strengthening these relationships over the coming months and years. The support and input from partner organisations, including local authorities, has been fundamental to the success of Thrive LDN projects and activities to date. London boroughs have played a key role in informing Thrive LDN’s activities and

approach to supporting good mental health and wellbeing, and have strengthened links into local communities and networks.

19. There are opportunities for further borough engagement around the next phase of the public mental health response to the pandemic and how we could work together to ensure we are supporting the most disadvantaged and vulnerable Londoners through what will be a challenging few months for many. In addition, there are further opportunities for boroughs to inform Thrive LDN's longer-term strategic priorities.

Recommendations

20. Leaders' Committee is asked to:

- Note the activity being undertaken by Thrive LDN prior to and during the Covid-19 pandemic
- To discuss and comment on the future priorities outlined, both over the next three to six months and longer-term

Financial Implications for London Councils

None

Legal Implications for London Councils

None

Equalities Implications for London Councils

None