

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> All
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Working with Partners and Institutions to Benefit Camden – Follow up report to the themed debate	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Cabinet Member for Jobs, Young People and Culture.	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b> Council	<b>DATE</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2025
<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b>  This report provides an overview of the Full Council themed debate on 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2025.  The report summarises the key points made by the 5 speakers, and subsequent debate at Full Council. The report highlights the next steps from the discussion and implementing recommendations of the Council's next steps with partners and institutions.  <b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b>  The following reports were used to produce this report: <a href="#">Partnership working Themed Debate Report</a>  <b>Contact Officer:</b> Charlotte Akinola Cabinet Office Lead 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG, telephone 020 79742797, email: charlotte.akinola@camden.gov.uk	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> The Council is asked to note the report.	



Signed: Councillor Sabrina Francis

Date: 20/02/2025

# 1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

## Introduction

- 1.1 Camden is a place that has significant ambition to make change – for our communities as well as to make our contribution to national change. Across our civic and community leaders, our businesses, our knowledge institutions, our public sector anchors – we have a huge amount of expertise, wealth, ideas, capacity and courage. As a Council we believe it is our role to direct, shape and inform those resources to contribute to our shared vision for Camden’s future. We Make Camden, and our four Camden Missions, are a statement that we believe we can and should achieve more for our residents through partnership with institutions and organisations across the borough, than working alone as a Council.
- 1.2 Our We Make Camden partnerships approach, focused on our Missions but also on our wider organisational ambitions, is not just to focus on single relationships between us and partner organisations, but to enable networks and relationships to grow around our shared priorities and vision for the Borough. We know from speaking to our partners that they value the Council’s role in:
  - Information sharing - understanding evidence and data and what is happening in the borough and how they can contribute.
  - Planning and resourcing activity in the Borough that might not be funded elsewhere
  - Convening - bringing together a range of partners that wouldn’t otherwise come together.
  - Directing - brokering opportunities for collaboration and partnership.
  - Shaping - intervening to create opportunities for under-represented groups or in areas that require action or focus.
  - Participation - creating a platform for wider citizen voices and using our role as a Council to bring together partners to advocate for change.
- 1.3 In these ways we are an interesting and useful partner for many organisations around Camden and there is a strong appetite from corporate partners and borough wide institutions to connect with us.
- 1.4 This report provides an overview of the Full Council debate on how working with partners and institutions can benefit Camden. It summarises the views of the speakers and subsequent debate within the Chamber. The report provides further details on the issues raised, sets out an update

on the actions taken following the debate, and outlines the future milestones related to the subject of the debate.

1.5 The Council was grateful to have five speakers join the debate:

1. Zoe Stern, Head of Community Affairs Europe, Global Affairs and Public Policy, Google
2. Amy Brown, Head of Creative Strategy, Google
3. Adewale, resident and Good Work Camden service user
4. Freddie Hudson, Head of Arsenal in the Community, Arsenal Football Club
5. Natasha Friend – Director, Camden Giving

## **2. SUMMARY OF FULL COUNCIL DEBATE**

- 2.1** The debate was introduced by Cllr Sabrina Francis, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Young People and Culture. Cllr Francis opened by emphasising the importance of We Make Camden as a community vision for the Borough and how it sets out challenge to the Council and our network of partners, anchor institutions, community organisations and businesses to work together to achieve that vision. Cllr Francis also noted that Camden is fortunate to be a borough in the heart of the city – rich with arts, culture and diversity and a world class centre of business growth - a gateway to Europe and the rest of the UK and a home to world renowned institutions.
- 2.2** Cllr Francis outlined how Camden’s annual We Make Camden Summit helps the Council to drive change, bringing together a network of organisations and citizens to explore how to best utilise expertise, skills and resources in the borough to overcome challenges Camden’s residents are facing. Cllr Francis also noted that Camden’s Missions set out how the borough can come together to tackle some of the biggest disparities and concerns facing its communities. Cllr Francis noted that through Camden’s Missions and across wider agendas, it is possible to hold mature and productive relationships and partnerships with institutions and businesses which deliver real, tangible opportunities for residents every day. These include businesses delivering inspirational activities in schools which support the curriculum, working with Good Work Camden to recruit local people to good jobs in an accessible and inclusive way and being part of our Climate Change Alliance to address the climate crisis. Cllr Francis concluded by noting that Camden Council’s role is to encourage partners and institutions to work together and leverage a collective strength to create a fairer, more equitable, and inclusive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.
- 2.3** Freddie Hudson, Head of Arsenal in the Community focused on how Arsenal Community’s team of 100 teachers, health workers, employment officers, youth workers and football coaches aim to provide a sense of belonging in the local area for marginalised groups. Arsenal’s work in Camden is free provision for Camden residents through delivery of

community programmes such as funding for the refurbishment of football pitches. Arsenal works with an array of partners and Freddie outlined current projects being undertaken in the borough, such as a youth engagement project, an adult mental health programme, education programme in primary schools and health projects such as a prostate cancer and a weight management programme. Freddie outlined Arsenal's support in Camden during Covid through their meals programme.

- 2.4** Adewale is a Camden resident and Good Work Camden service user. He outlined how the partnership of UCLH and Good Work Camden has impacted his life following his arrival in the UK from Nigeria as a student. Following the ill health of his wife he accessed the services of GWC and on their advice visited a UCLH job fair which eventually led to a job opportunity. Adewale praised GWC's support as a service, outlining how they not only gave him a job referral, but also prepared him for interview. Adewale concluded that he was grateful for the service as not only did it support him getting employment, but also gave him a sense of belonging and community.
- 2.5** Zoe Stern, Head of Community Affairs Europe, Global Affairs and Public Policy, and Amy Brown, Head of Creative Strategy at Google focused on Google's aim to be a good neighbour in the cities in which it operates, which it does through identifying the strategic aims of partners in the community and understanding where Google is best placed to support. Zoe praised Camden's mission approach and outlined how Google supports the missions work through its Quarterly Community Training Day, Community Leadership Programme and its support of Camden's Food Mission through a grant as well as its support of the Youth Mission through summer work experience placements. Amy concluded by promoting the newly opened London AI Campus which complements Camden's existing youth services provision. Through a partnership with Camden Learning and local schools, Google felt as though it could set deep roots into the community to better support and understand educational needs.
- 2.6** Natasha Friend, Director of Camden Giving which is a participatory funder which awards funding to community projects in the Borough outlined the importance of citizen's voices and partnership working to engage communities. Natasha outlined Camden Giving's work to encourage men to establish and run grassroots projects in Camden with the support of the Council's We make Camden Kit and how Camden Giving's fundraising and partnership work is supported by the Council's partnership team and platform. Natasha concluded by highlighting how the Council should be better at listening to ideas and engaging partners outside of its work streams.
- 2.7** There were questions from Members about addressing inequalities and diversity in accessing outreach schemes as well racism in football. A member was concerned with how the AI campus could reach the needs of its diverse community and about how the digital divide in Camden could be bridged with the support of partners. Members also raised questions about

how partners monitored success in their community projects and apprenticeship programmes with members reflecting on their own experiences of programmes that weren't connecting with marginalised groups. Members were also interested in the detail of the 2020 LGA peer review and how Camden has taken significant steps to strengthen partnerships to align investment with community goals, as well as identifying and strengthening levers the council has to encourage businesses to deliver on social value targets. Finally, a member highlighted the importance of adult education programmes to close the attainment divide delivered by partners in the borough as well as how to encourage other businesses to work in partnership with community groups.

- 2.8** Cllr Francis closed the debate by thanking the speakers. She highlighted how the debate reminded members that the power of partnerships lies in the ability to work together and the participation and engagement from partners, councillors and officers throughout the debate has demonstrated joint ambitions to work in unity.

### **3. ACTION WE ARE TAKING**

- 3.1** We will continue to build and connect across our We Make Camden network of partners to encourage partnerships and collaborations that will help deliver the missions and address the big challenges facing the borough. Part of this work involves us placing more emphasis on sharing and celebrating the significant energy and input already being put in by partners like Arsenal in the Community, Camden Giving and Google, who spoke in the themed debate about the significant contributions they have made over the past few years.
- 3.2** A strong area of feedback in the debate was around the need for us to focus on where partner resource can make the most impact and making sure that collectively, our responses are coordinated and connected. Both the State of the Borough report and our Good Life Camden (GLC) framework (referenced in the main report) continue to be a key focal point at our annual We Make Camden Summit, and together they enable organisations to take an evidenced based approach to collectively prioritising action and measuring impact against our local priorities, which we revisit annually.
- 3.3** While we have a wide range of committed partners, there are still many businesses and institutions based in the borough who we have yet to build relationships with, or where we have an opportunity to build relationships to deliver more impact and opportunity in Camden. We continue to refine and target our asks and calls to action for partners linked to our missions and the things we know will help us make progress. Our 'theories of change' in missions have enabled us to identify priority areas based on detailed evidence gathering and ongoing engagement and participation in our neighbourhoods.

- 3.4 In addition to the We Make Camden Summit, since 2023 we have been convening the leadership of some of the largest corporate and knowledge organisations in Camden for anchor roundtables. Through these discussions, we are exploring the different ways these large organisations can contribute as good neighbours in the borough and identifying new opportunities to partner and collaborate. The focus of these conversations has so far included the Community Wealth Fund, maximising apprenticeships, the development of the Inclusive Talent Strategy and work placement opportunities, and tackling health inequalities. As our We Make Camden Mission approach develops, partner governance is being established to ensure that we can maximise the impact of partner collaborations within the borough and continue to mobilise contributions and action within our Missions.
- 3.5 We will also explore many of the specific questions and feedback from this partnership debate through ongoing missions development work with partners, including at the summit. The youth mission has defined a universal youth offer, and in order to meet this we are working with partners, with schools and through our Council communications to make sure that all of our young people in Camden know about and can access what the Council and our partners have to offer. Additionally, we are working to make sure that young people such as our care experienced young people, young people with special educational needs and young people involved in the youth justice system, are given the additional support they might need to access the opportunities on offer. We also plan to scope the potential to align the Inclusive Business Network more closely with the missions.
- 3.6 Recognising the importance of adult community learning programmes our work in the diversity mission has a stream which focuses on civic voice and opportunity. In addition to the existing adult education provision through local colleges and training providers, our partnerships with higher education institutions are delivering new opportunities for residents, such as UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, who have developed a Citizen Science Academy that offers high-quality, practice-based education and training programmes to equip people with research knowledge and practical skills to get involved in social action and local decision-making. Central St Martins (UAL) are also working with Somers Town Job Hub as part of the Future Neighbourhoods programme to develop learning accreditations that recognise skills gained in social action and volunteering settings. These courses help build residents' confidence in their skills and help prepare them to access further opportunities and connections in their neighbourhoods. We will also be working with partners to develop 'opportunity centres' at the AI campus and the Euston Skills Centre – which will provide safe study places and extend the learning beyond the school day in inspiring and interactive ways and provides encounters with employers which increases aspiration and opportunity.

#### **4. Legal Implications**

The Borough Solicitor has reviewed this report, and his comments have been incorporated.

## **5. Resource Implications**

The Executive Director Corporate Services has been consulted and has no comments to add.

## **6. Environmental Implications**

This report should contain no significant environmental implications for Camden.