

Cabinet Response to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission Review into Hackney, A Place for Every Child and Young Person

CABINET MEETING DATE

11 October 2016

CLASSIFICATION

Open

WARD(S) AFFECTED

All Wards

CABINET MEMBER

Cllr Anntoinette Bramble
Children's Services

KEY DECISION

No

GROUP DIRECTOR

Anne Canning
Children, Adults, Community Health (Acting)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Hackney has seen many changes over the last 15 years and even the most positive changes can have impacts that may be unforeseen. This is why the Council launched the 'Hackney: A Place for Everyone' consultation in order to ask our residents, and those who work here, their views of the Borough as it is now, and as it should be in the future.
- 1.2. The report produced by the Scrutiny Commission has added valuable information to that process, and has also helped highlight how children and young people are at the very heart of the work of this Council. But it has also highlighted how the financial difficulties of the last few years have impacted our services' abilities to help all those who need our assistance.
- 1.3. Despite these difficulties improving the opportunities for our children and young people remains one of the main priorities for the Council, and is at the centre of my work as Cabinet Member. Because the results of all our efforts are perhaps needed now more than ever.
- 1.4. I commend this report to Cabinet.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Cabinet is asked to approve the content of this response.

3. Executive Response to the Scrutiny Recommendations

Recommendation One	
<p>a) We recommend that in developing the response to Hackney a Place for Everyone, the Council should place the lives of children, young people and their families at the heart of our vision for the borough. Our success should be measured by our ability to provide equal opportunities for all children in Hackney. Our strategy should recognise the importance of a wide range of service areas to achieving this vision and their contribution to it should be a measure of our success. We recommend that the Council investigate the approaches being piloted by some other authorities, such as “<i>Child Friendly Leeds</i>” and identify lessons for Hackney.</p> <p>As part of its overall programme of work, we recommend that the Council develops strategies that are focused on narrowing the education, health, vocational and cultural opportunities experiences by different groups of children and young people in Hackney. Alongside the current work taking place to identify how the attainment of black boys in Hackney can be improved, we recommend that resources are dedicated to developing a strategy for improving the attainment of Turkish, Cypriot and Kurdish children in Hackney.</p> <p>We ask that an update on progress is presented to the Commission on 5th April 2017.</p>	<p>Improving the life chances of all of our young people and making sure they have a range of opportunities to develop their potential is one of the key drivers in all of our work.</p> <p>To achieve this we provide a wide range of services in children’s centres, popular and effective youth services, a wide range of early help provision, good schools and strong social care systems that keep children safe and supports families.</p> <p>We are always ambitious to improve our effectiveness and will carefully consider approaches from other Local Authorities to see if there are lessons to be learnt for Hackney.</p> <p>There is work currently underway to raise the attainment of black boys in Hackney. We will investigate how we can use lessons learnt from the early stages of this work to raise the attainment of Turkish, Cypriot and Kurdish children in Hackney</p> <p>Progress will be reported to the commission in April 2017</p>
<p>b) We also recommend that success in narrowing the gaps in attainment between different groups of children and young people is reported to the Commission on an annual basis. This should be via</p>	<p>We currently report attainment gaps among different groups of pupils in Hackney schools on an annual basis. We are in a position to measure and monitor the attainment gaps at Key Stage 2</p>

<p>the Annual Update on Achievement of Students at Key Stage 2 and 4 item that the Commission receives. This item should be revised to include breakdowns of attainment by different groups in Hackney – by ethnicity, gender, Pupil Premium / non Pupil Premium eligibility. This item should also be expanded to include attainment data (by different groups) at the Early Years Foundation Stage.</p> <p>We ask that this item is submitted to the Commission meeting of 5th April 2017.</p>	<p>(KS2), Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) between groups of pupils by; ethnicity, pupil-premium/non-pupil premium and gender.</p> <p>The only caveat would be around ethnicity data at EYFSP at private, voluntary or independent (PVI settings). However, reporting of attainment gaps, at all Key Stages – including the gap between pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is routine and embedded in Hackney Learning Trust. We will brief the commission on this information, and on how we seek to address disproportionality between groups.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Two</p> <p>a) We recommend that the Council further investigates how it can further support models like the integration of Young Hackney with school provision, along with other provision including that Commissioned by a school. In doing so the Council should aim to ensure that those groups of children and young people who are currently reaching lower levels of achievement than their peers - including children of African and Caribbean and Turkish, Cypriot and Kurdish heritage – are effectively supported to improve their education.</p> <p>We ask that an update on progress is presented to the Commission on 5th April 2017.</p>	<p>Young Hackney currently works with the borough's secondary schools to deliver early help based upon a systemic understanding of the key relationships in a child or young person's life, and, in particular, the critical influence of peers and family members.</p> <p>The majority of secondary schools in Hackney have an allocated Young Hackney team that work with them to identify students who require additional support to participate and achieve. Our teams work with schools to consider what support the service can provide to support the delivery of Personal, Social and Health Education for all students.</p> <p>Whilst Primary schools do not have an allocated Young Hackney team they may still refer children to First Access & Screening Team (FAST) for screening, assessment and allocation to early help services including Young Hackney, Family Support, and Children's Centres.</p>
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<p>b) The Commission would welcome regular reports on the use of Young Hackney and other services to support the engagement of all children and young people in education in Hackney and its effectiveness in closing the gaps between the attainment levels of different groups of children and young people. To enable this, we ask that the Young Hackney section of the Children’s Social Care Bi-annual report gives more detail of the extent of their work with education providers to help drive up engagement and to address attainment gaps.</p> <p>We ask that this is in place in time to be reflected within the second report of 2016/17.</p>	<p>The new tender for the Connecting Young Hackney framework of commissioned youth organisations has been developed in two lots, to increase the potential for the delivery of time limited projects that support aspiration and attainment. Whilst schools will continue to directly contract a range of providers for curriculum support, the list of providers on the Connecting Young Hackney Framework will be made available to schools. It is hoped that this may encourage the use of voluntary sector organisations located within the community and representative of cultural groups.</p> <p>An update will be reported to the commission in April 2017.</p> <p>When preparing the next bi-annual report the Young Hackney service will provide a section on the work of Young Hackney, and its impact on promoting engagement and raising standards.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Three</p> <p>The Commission would welcome further information about the assessments carried out when the Council is providing temporary housing</p>	<p>The London Borough of Hackney has undergone a rapid change in its socio-economic profile as improved transport links, good</p>
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<p>or re-housing a family and the extent to which they detail the circumstances and needs of children and young people in the family, including in relation to their education and ability to remain at a particular school. We would also welcome further information about whether a change in housing circumstances, where the Council is involved, triggers any wider assessment or offer of support to the family.</p> <p>We request that this information is made available in the response to this report.</p>	<p>schools and parks, a vibrant local economy, has made Hackney a particularly attractive place to live especially for young professionals and new families. Average house prices have increased by over 63% over the course of the last 5 years, which has had a corresponding impact on the local rental market, where rents have increased by between 32% and 75% over the same period.</p> <p>But this means that the borough is rapidly becoming unaffordable for existing communities. Rent levels remain high and affordability is a primary obstacle to retaining accommodation within the borough.</p> <p>At the same time the Housing Benefit subsidy rate (the amount Hackney receives to cover Housing Benefit on Temporary Accommodation) has been frozen since 2011. A position which is being exacerbated due to ongoing welfare reform, benefit caps and growing restrictions on overall benefit entitlement.</p> <p>Due to rising rents and benefit restrictions it is now extremely challenging to obtain temporary accommodation across Greater London, at a cost which is affordable for residents or councils. This is especially true for family accommodation for families with a 2 or 3 bed need where new supply is virtually non-existent. Most London boroughs are now placing households out of London due to lack of supply.</p> <p>In Hackney at the point of a homeless application a "Housing Advice and Homelessness Affordability and Accommodation Suitability Questionnaire" is completed. This questionnaire</p>
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asks key questions about the circumstances and needs of children and young people in the family, including in relation to their education. The information collated includes:

- Details of all the children in the household
- Their age, year group and the school they attend.
- How they travel to school
- Whether they are at a critical school age (for example studying for GCSE's)
- Whether the children have any additional support needs
- Whether the children or household members have any medical conditions
- Any special circumstances which require the household to remain in the borough or nearby.

This information is considered during any placement offer. If suitable accommodation is available then applicants with children will be housed in Hackney or surrounds so they can maintain key links including education. However demand for family housing greatly exceeds supply, and in reality due to these challenges it is sadly not practical to provide local temporary accommodation for every family with children in education.

As the borough faces severe pressure on housing and constrains on supply it is increasingly necessary to make decisions about the suitability of out of borough / London placements for households with children. In many cases housing out of London is more sustainable in the longer term, with lower rents allowing households to better meet subsistence costs. Out of London placements are only ever used

where suitable and affordable accommodation is not available in London, or there are good reasons why the family should not be housed in London.

In making a decision on placements the Council will aim to prioritise those households with additional educational support needs for a local placement. For example households containing a child with special educational needs who are receiving education in Hackney, where a change of school could be detrimental to their well-being would be prioritised for a local placement.

The Council also recognises that it is important for children to remain at the same school at critical periods (such as when they are within 6 months of key exams including GCSE's or A Levels). In these circumstances the Council will aim to prioritise these families for a placement within 60 minutes travelling distance on public transport of their existing school. However due to the severe shortage of affordable accommodation in London this cannot be guaranteed in every occasion.

In reality due to the challenging housing situation across London, and the numbers of families approaching as homeless, other families with children in education (with no other grounds for a local placement) cannot be prioritised. Education and attendance at local schools will not be considered a reason to refuse accommodation. When a placement means that a vulnerable family are placed are placed outside of London, Hackney will ensure that the family receive appropriate support including help to access local schools and

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<p>Recommendation Four</p> <p>We recommend that the Council investigates whether information held across its services can be better used to identify children, young people and parents who are likely to need additional support and how, in partnership with schools, this information can be used to trigger specific support for children, young people and their families. The Commission heard evidence about the particular impact of housing on opportunities for children and young people and requests that information from the Council’s housing services are particularly considered as part of this. We request that options for improving information sharing and support are presented to the Commission.</p> <p>We ask that options are presented to the Commission meeting of 5th April 2017.</p>	<p>The First Access & Screening Team (FAST) was launched in October 2015 following a Children & Young People’s Service restructure which merged and remodelled the former Partnership Triage and First Response Team.</p> <p>The merger of the two services has created a single ‘front door’ which joins social work screening activity with co-located partners from police, probation and health services, and which is supported by skilled data researchers. FAST also has close working relationship with Hackney Learning Trust, Hackney Housing and a range of local providers. Working together FAST are able to make rapid decisions about the support children need, facilitating prompt access to services based on a broad range of intelligence, information and professional judgement.</p> <p>In March 2016, a letter was sent to all Head Teachers in the borough setting out how information would be shared. This has clarified FAST’s responsibility to manage issues of consent and confidentiality at all times, whilst making certain to schools that the children and young people who attend are fully informed of the decisions and actions arising out of a child coming to notice of FAST. The full operational protocol is available on the City & Hackney Safeguarding Board website: http://www.chscb.org.uk/protocols-guidance-and-procedures/</p>
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	<p>We will review the impact of the current protocol for sharing information and report back on 5th April, 2017.</p>
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<p>Recommendation Five</p> <p>We recommend that the Council investigates how it can work with schools to better support parental engagement in children and young people’s education. We recommend that the Council forms a working group with Turkish and Kurdish parents to investigate whether there are particular programmes or initiatives that will help support parents from these communities to engage with their children’s education.</p> <p>We ask that a progress update is given to the Commission of 5th April 2017.</p>	<p>We currently offer a wide range of information, advice and guidance for parents to support them at every stage of their child’s education.</p> <p>This includes universal access to parenting programmes, ‘drop-in’ sessions with identified professionals; support for parents in understanding school processes and procedures, and information sessions supporting parents with the transition from primary to secondary education.</p> <p>We support schools who wish to further refine how they engage with parents. This work includes accredited training for colleagues in working with parents and bespoke advice to individual schools. We also work with school-based, community organisations to help them to better support parents with the education of children and young people from their communities.</p> <p>We will continue to work with schools to encourage them to identify how they can further improve the engagement of any groups who may need more specific support to ensure that the voice of these parents is heard.</p> <p>This would include working with schools and community groups to improve engagement with those parents who, because of language and particular cultural factors, feel particularly disadvantaged.</p>
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	<p>A council of Turkish and Kurdish parents, who could engage with school leaders to better identify parental engagement with this group of parents, should be set up. We can ask leaders of schools where there is a significant number of Turkish and Kurdish parents to sit on this Council. Together school leaders and parents can identify common barriers, celebrate and share best practice in engaging with members of these communities, and identify any additional support that could be given. This model could be replicated for any other groups which are identified as being harder to reach.</p> <p>Progress will be reported to the commission in April 2017</p>
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<p>Recommendation Six</p> <p>a) The Commission recommends that the Hackney Learning Trust works with secondary schools to improve the consistency of the work experience offer provided to children across Hackney; this was found to vary significantly by school. Support should be tailored to each child – enabling a range of activity from access to university to support for the transition in to work. The Commission recommends that help should be focused on those children and groups who are at greatest risk of being NEET and least likely to receive support from elsewhere.</p> <p>On this point, we understand that the London Borough of Newham have introduced a model in which the local authority itself plays a greater role in brokering work experience placements for children in Years 10 and 11. We welcome and celebrate the role of our</p>	<p>Unfortunately changes in legislation meant that it is no longer statutory for schools to provide work experience for under 16s and Education Business Partnership (EBP) no longer receive Government funding. Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) has encouraged schools to continue to offer it and most still do. With concerns over the new GCSEs requiring more teaching time and the expense of organising work experience placements, HLT are aware of, and have spoken to, several schools who plan to stop or reduce their work experience in Year 10.</p> <p>However, most schools still currently use Inspire, the Hackney EBP to source all or some of their placements as work experience placements are very costly to manage if they are to be of a high quality.</p>
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<p>Council in delivering opportunities through its Hackney 100 Programme. However, we have heard from young people that the extent to which they have been aided within their school to access good quality placements might vary. In addition, we have heard that pupils without access to particular networks can fare worse in their securing of quality work experience.</p> <p>We ask that the Hackney Learning Trust explores whether a similar model to that in Newham could be employed by Hackney.</p> <p>We ask that a progress update is given to the Commission of 5th April 2017.</p> <p>b) The Council should work to increase the number and quality of offers it makes through its apprenticeship scheme both directly and by facilitating links to partners across Hackney. The Council should consider how it can use its regeneration and economic development programme to further develop support for children and young people including quality work placements. The Council should assess how it can increase the proportion of Hackney 100 placements that are awarded to children who are eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>We ask that a progress update is given to the Commission of 5th April 2017.</p>	<p>HLT officers working in schools will continue to promote the value of work experience and encourage schools to offer such opportunities to their students, as this Council believes in the value of good work experience and the benefits that our children and young people gain from them.</p> <p>An update will be reported to the commission in April 2017.</p> <p>Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) is involved in the development of the wider Council apprenticeship programme and is promoting that any such offer must include a range of opportunities that can be accessed by students from a range of backgrounds and ability levels including supported internships for young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the programme. A SEN pilot has been brokered by HLT and delivered by The Tower Project and Hackney Community College, HLT is keen to offer placements for the pilot and it is hoped that LBH can also be involved.</p> <p>Progress will be reported to the commission in April 2017</p>
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<p>Recommendation Seven</p> <p>We recommend that, as part of this, the Council identifies how it can use the information it holds to improve targeting of the cultural offers made to children and young people across</p>	<p>The Cultural Development Team will work with the Chief Executive's Policy Team to identify groups that the Council would recommend that creative and cultural organisations</p>
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<p>Hackney and any financial assistance that is available.</p> <p>We also recommend that Hackney Youth Parliament and the Council's Regeneration Delivery Team are included in this forum. Inclusion of the Regeneration Team would enable the sharing of advice on how organisations might develop their relationships with businesses and on any support that they are able to offer. We hope that this could help deliver more sponsorship activity.</p> <p>We would hope that the work above might help inform the content of a new Cultural Strategy for the borough (acting as a refresh of the Creative Hackney - cultural policy framework published in 2010). This refresh would build further on the policy framework themes of the Council acting as a facilitator and enabler for the cultural sector. It would set out a defined approach around how we and other service providers can help the sector target any free or subsidised offers effectively, and to build relationships with a wider range businesses in the borough.</p> <p>We suggest that the Group Director, Neighbourhoods and Housing takes overall oversight of this recommendation.</p> <p>However, implementing this strategy effectively would require input and buy in from a range of Council and non-Council functions, wider than those based within the Cultural Development Team. As such, it is likely to need a cross-directorate approach, drawing on research and insight from the Chief Executive's directly-managed area of the Council in addition to input from a number of areas (Public Realm, Regeneration, Housing) within the newly formed Neighbourhoods and Housing Directorate.</p>	<p>could target in directing discounted admission prices. Policy and Cultural Development Officers will explore how the Hackney Youth Parliament can contribute to this process.</p> <p>An annual cultural forum will be arranged so that creative and cultural organisations based in the borough and potential partners can come together and exchange best practice. This will be used as an opportunity to share and promote this information, and to collect feedback and suggestions. The first forum is expected to take place in summer 2017.</p> <p>The Cultural Development Team will work with the Policy Team to produce a Cultural Strategy for the borough, although the small size of the team could mean that additional resources are required to undertake this work.</p> <p>The Cultural Development Team is to be transferred to the Chief Executive's Division in September 2016 so it may be more appropriate that responsibility for oversight transfers as well.</p> <p>Progress will be reported to the commission in April 2017</p>
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<p>We ask that a progress update is given to the Commission of 5th April 2017.</p>	
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