

Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of Meeting: 24/02/2020

Title of Report: Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men

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Report Summary:

The Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) programme is in its fifth year.

This report seeks to look at what has been delivered within the programme, its purpose and objectives. The report highlights the recent change in governance, the role of the community and youth leaders and funding ambitions.

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This report also seeks to highlight, through the 'Challenges' and 'Response' sections where the programme will need to receive additional support from commission members, residents and how individuals can get involved in the work moving forward.

Notes

'Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men' and 'YBM' are used interchangeably throughout this document.

The full Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Strategy and the 2018-19 Data Digest are provided for additional context on specific areas.

Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men

1. Background

The Story So Far

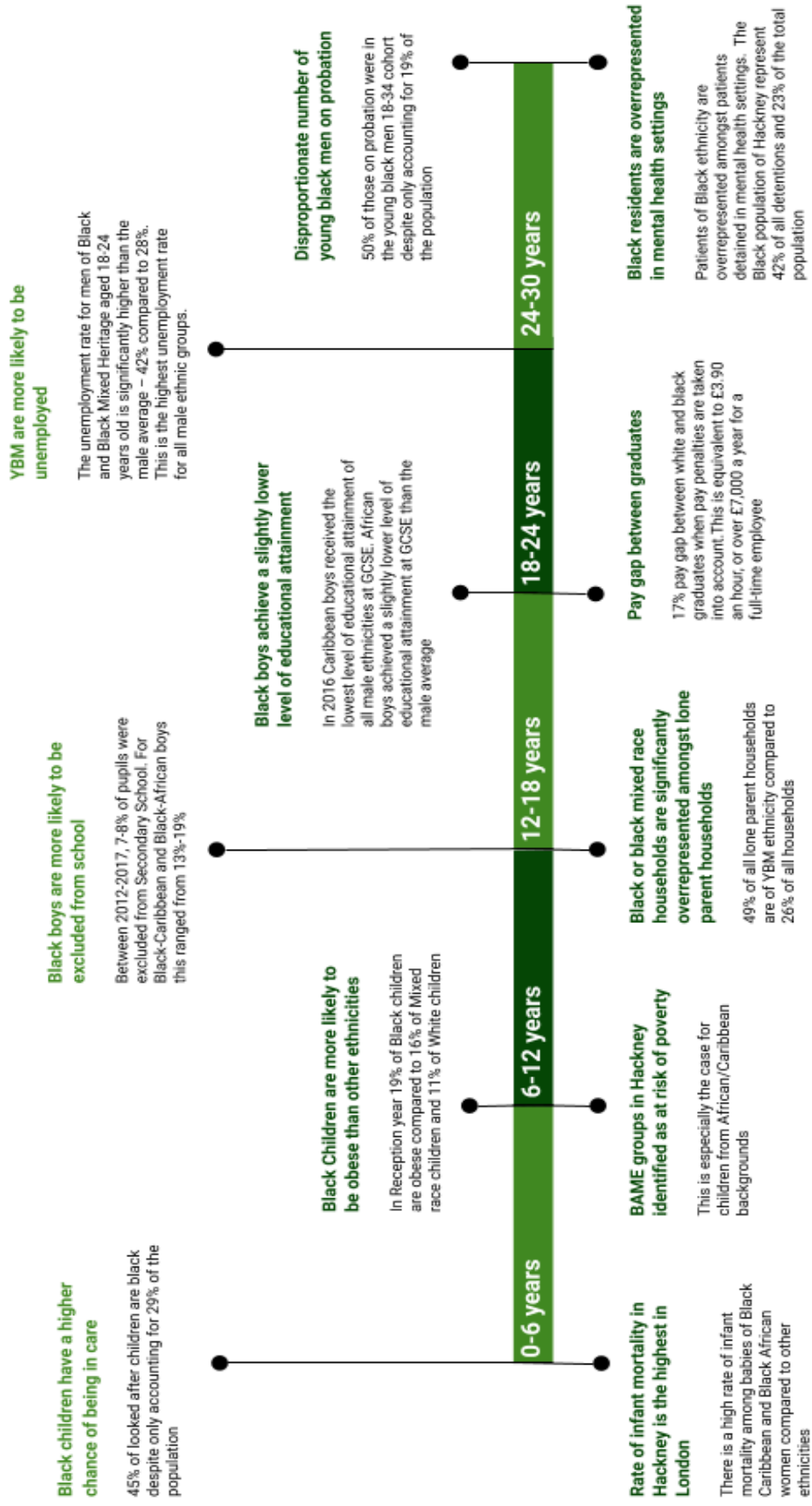
The Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men programme was created based on a recognition that young Black Men disproportionately faced worse outcomes than their peers in a range of areas from their early years and into adulthood.

This initiative looked to create a partnership approach to tackling these disproportionalities and creating coordinated responses to the challenges identified. Typically responses to inequalities impacting negatively on young black men have been piecemeal, focusing on one area or taking one approach. This initiative seeks to create a sustained and coordinated approach.

This programme seeks to make sure that disproportionalities facing young Black Men across services fall closer in line with the rest of the population. This means coordinating the approach of services in the Borough which work directly with YBM, and ensuring that families of young black men, the young black men themselves and their peers have an awareness and participation in local decision making.

The last 5 years have seen us begin initial dialogue with young Black Men and their families, start to begin an institutional conversation about race and ethnicity, working with communities and creating the transformational change required.


2014 saw initial scoping - ensuring that we established a foundational understanding from those of the key issues facing young Black Men.



2015 sought to create a sector-wide understanding of what it means to be Young Black and Male in Hackney and laid the path for the creation of the Inspirational Leaders, a collection of young Black Hackney residents aged 18-25, whose insights would steer the programme. In 2015, the programme set the following targets:

Programme Targets (2015)

<p>Programme aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 10 years, outcomes for Black boys and young Black Men are the same as the wider population • After 15 years, we start to see cultural changes in terms of aspirations in terms of trust in the state • After 15 years, working with local authorities, central government and the state, we also want to see changes in media representation and portrayals 	<p>Education: By 2025, There is no gap in attainment or exclusions between young black men and the wider population at school</p> <p>Reducing Harm By 2025, there is a significant reduction in gangs. The offending rate for young black men is the same as the population overall</p> <p>Mental Health By 2025, there are fewer young black men presenting in crisis for mental health support and take up of early and preventative help is greater.</p>	<p>Hackney-wide targets by 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increase in peer led engagement and research delivered by young black men, which is well utilised by the statutory sector • Successful black men have a higher profile in Hackney • Young black men in Hackney are proud of their identity • There are more black men in prominent positions in the Council • There is greater understanding among public sector workers of what it means to be young, male and black in Hackney • Parents and Young black men know what support is available and are comfortable accessing it • Black parents views of the public sector have improved
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2016 focused on the development of aims for the strategy, the creation of a theory of change and ensuring that work done in previous years was informing the programme.

2017-18 saw the formalisation of the partnership, development of cross-cutting workstreams and identifying institutional needs to focus on culture and identity and workforce diversity. The priority area workstreams became, Education, Mental Health and Reducing Harm with Culture and Identity as well as Employment and Enterprise regarded as key enablers for the success of this work.

In 2019, the strategic focus was on the implementation and delivery of solutions and new approaches based on the previous five years. This also focused heavily on re-designing governance and the shaping working principles.

2. Delivery

This section provides a summary on activities delivered throughout 2019 to further the YBM agenda, tackle disproportionalities and make progress on agreed targets.

The approach to delivery sees youth leadership, council directorates and local voluntary and statutory bodies taking responsibility for delivering change across a range of areas. The aim is that a coordinated approach to tackling disproportionalities has a range of service providers and experiences delivering solutions on behalf of residents. This seeks to create 'programme delivery' which tackles disproportionalities effectively and systematically.

A. Youth Leaders

The YBM Youth Leaders had a very busy year. There is a steady flow of participants that engage with the YBM programme as a result of work with the Department for Work and Pensions and also a renewed independent advisory group to the Metropolitan Police, Account. There have been regular Account training and research activities throughout the year. In addition, the group has focused on rethinking the governance structure of the YBM Partnership, which in turn has brought in more recruits as the young people became more excited about the creation of the Politically Black Movement. As a result we now have a committed group of young men and women who regularly attend weekly meetings and who have now divided their work into three groups:

- **The ‘Organisers’ Project Team**
 - Youth Training, Research and Engagement (delivering workshops in youth clubs and to other groups of young people)
 - Programme link between youth leadership and other young people
- **The ‘Ambassadors’ Project Team**
 - Representation and Advocacy in meetings with senior leaders across services
 - Programme link between youth leadership and statutory bodies
- **The ‘Messengers’ Project Team**
 - Programme communications and community engagement
 - Programme link between youth leadership and community members

Since April 2019, 28 young people have participated in 631 hours of work (excluding Account). Some of the highlights of the year included:

Mentoring: One of our long-standing youth leaders engaged in a three-month mentoring relationship (April – July) with a young man at Gainsborough Primary School. He was excluded from school and through their work together, the young man was able to re-engage.

Engaging with black identity: Several sessions were held with CLR James Archive from April, with the young people learning about the history of local black activism in the borough. Over the summer they took part in a Racial Identity training, which proved to galvanise them around the work of the Politically Black Movement. The young men took part in the Black Men’s Health Event held at Hackney CVS in May.

Creating a movement: The identity work dovetailed with the development of the Act for Change application, in which the embryonic movement was created and supported the young people’s shift from seeing themselves as participants in the YBM Partnership to drivers of change within it. Unfortunately, while this application made it through several stages, we were unsuccessful. However, the work we did was not wasted and helped to inform the rethinking of the wider partnership’s governance structure. Regular weekly sessions began in July working with Practical Governance and by November the young people presented a new structure to both the Council and the YBM Partnership Board, as well as to the Big Lottery who we hope will continue to support this work moving forward.

The young men also continued to participate in YBM Partnership Meetings and Mental Health Workstream meetings. Two young people spoke at a Mental Health event at

Homerton Hospital. Six youth leaders participated in a Public Health workshop for the whole public health team and key integrated commissioning workstream leads, in which priorities for future work were identified. Our Account young people have presented their research to the Community Safety Partnership and have met with several statutory services in the course of their research.

Mental health work: The youth leaders co-facilitating mindfulness sessions at Hackney Quest and Pembury Youth Clubs in the Spring. Another cohort of youth leaders also took part in our mindfulness sessions at Hackney CVS which ran from May to July. The youth leaders have also played a key role in setting up the Pembury Cool Down Café, which is launching in February. Training for these peer mentors kicked off in October with Tree of Life and continued with Boundaries Training with ELFT as well as three Induction sessions with the full Cool Down Café team.

Community work: Apart from the delivery of several Know Your Rights sessions with the Account group in local youth clubs and colleges, the few youth leaders supported the Young Hackney summer programme. Two of the youth leaders are delivering regular weekly sessions at Clapton Park youth club, which started in September and continues. We also had a youth leader volunteering at the Pembury Youth Club.

B. Hackney Learning Trust (HLT), Education and Schools

The Education strand of the YBM programme has the following strands and focus areas:

- Leadership and culture
- Tracking and intervention (standards)
- Personal development and behaviour (exclusions)
- Curriculum and participation
- Parental engagement

The work on Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men is overseen by senior leaders at Hackney Learning Trust; these leaders are also the chairs for the YBM Education workstream at Hackney Learning Trust.

A revised structure creates coherence and connectedness across service areas and workstreams from other partners and agencies e.g. reducing harm, well-being and mental health.

There is a shift from universal support to arrangements that are targeted, specific, bespoke and co-produced with schools. This work will be shaped by and channelled through service plans. In this paper, leaders at all levels are expected to undertake champion roles.

During 2019, the Learning Trust:

- Ran an YBM conference in February focused on lived-experience, understanding cultural contexts and tackling unconscious bias.
- Developed a school governor's conference in June on young people who are "Left out and Left behind" by the school system and therefore at risk of exclusion.

- Has provided training to other London Boroughs and/or schools in these settings.
- Provided cultural competency training and developing a self-evaluation tool based on Helm's racial identity model.

Hackney Learning Trust's Education Strategy for Young Black Men has now been endorsed by the senior leadership team. It can be found [here](#). This recognises that disengagement at school is linked to a range of other outcomes including: exclusions and alternative provision, mental health issues and unsafe behaviours such as perpetrating and being a victim of violence.

The strategy acknowledges and addresses issues which affect children and young people's sense of self-worth, aspiration and life chances, such as:

- Unconscious bias
- Cultural competence
- Low representation among leaders, teachers and governors
- Lack of understanding of cultural diversity – cultural competency.

Arrangements for 2019-20 see more structured collaboration with the Youth Leaders within the programme.

A Headteacher Steering Group consisting of the leadership at Primary and Secondary schools within Hackney remains central to the strategy. This creates a platform for headteachers to share ideas and deliver new initiatives across their schools, coordinate their reporting on progress and impact and a forum for tackling emerging challenges.

There is a commitment to targeting ambitious outcomes; leaders and governors taking a whole school approach; transparent reporting and sharing data and working together in new ways and sharing good practice to tackle disproportionality.

The list of schools currently actively involved are:

- London Fields Primary School
- Haggerston School
- Queensbridge
- Clapton Girls' Academy
- Benthall
- Mossbourne Community Academy
- St Mary's
- St Matthias
- Skinners' Academy
- St John-Jerusalem
- Cardinal Pole
- Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form
- Shoreditch Park
- Harrington Hill
- Daubeney Primary School
- New Wave Federation

C. Keeping Young People Safe

The YBM programme's approach to Keeping Young People Safe is divided between two key streams of work. The Children and Families Service-wide YBM strategy which is led by senior Children and Families service leads and the programme-specific Reducing Harm Workstream chaired by Children and Families Services' staff members.

Senior leaders within Children and Families Services (CFS) have created a working group to implement a cross-service strategy. The Children and Families service strategy for YBM has led to a series of workshops and training sessions for staff taking place during practice weeks looking at identity and diversity and Black Masculinity and Fatherhood. Young Hackney has developed a three-year strategy to transform practice to tackle systemic racism and create a working culture which tackles disproportionalities.

The YBM Reducing Harm workstream is reviewing and implementing changes to improve responses to reduce harm and rates of reoffending. It is collating all data related to instances of harm experienced by Young Black Men and assessing whether these figures are increasing or decreasing.

D. Tackling Health Disproportionalities

The programme approach to Tackling Health disproportionalities centres on the Mental Health workstream but features instances of partnership work from the wider health system, including the Hackney Public Health Team.

There is currently one system YBM Lead in Adult Social Care. The YBM Mental Health Workstream is co-chaired by senior leaders within the Public Health Team and Children and Families' Services.

Public Health

- The Public Health Team have produced an Audit of the work done to date within the service to Improve Outcomes for Young Black Men.
- Key themes that emerged from this audit, along with input from the Youth Leaders group, were used to design a whole service workshop on 26th November 2019 for public health and integrated commissioning leads. Six youth leaders attended this workshop and led discussions on key topic areas, including family, mental health, healthy behaviours and addictions and communications with services.
- The workshop discussions are being used to identify new ways of working to improve outcomes for Young Black Men - working with Youth Leadership representatives
- The next steps for this work and how best to embed action across wider integrated commissioning work, as well as public health services, will be developed over the next year.
- Specific opportunities include recommissioning the Wellbeing Network, which will include a specific wellbeing offer for members of African and Caribbean communities.

Wider Health System:

- Inspirational Leaders deliver workshop at Homerton Education Centre for International Men's Day.
- Collaboration with Inspirational Leaders to deliver proposal

YBM Mental Health Workstream (related programme area)

- Statutory, Voluntary and Youth leadership have developed an action [plan](#) dedicated to addressing Mental Health disproportionalities.

E. Enablers: (Employment and Enterprise & Culture and Identity)

The Employment and Enterprise strand and the Culture and Identity strand do not currently have centralised workstreams or strategies. There are instances however, of specific projects which have involved youth leadership, such as the Parity Project which employed 3 of Youth Leaders in the last 6 months. Additionally, youth leaders have been working with Hackney CVS and Hackney Archives on exploring identity and the History of Hackney and many are members of the Account Youth Independent Advisory Group.

A revived strategy or workstream - particularly in the case of Employment and Enterprise - is a priority area for the coming months.

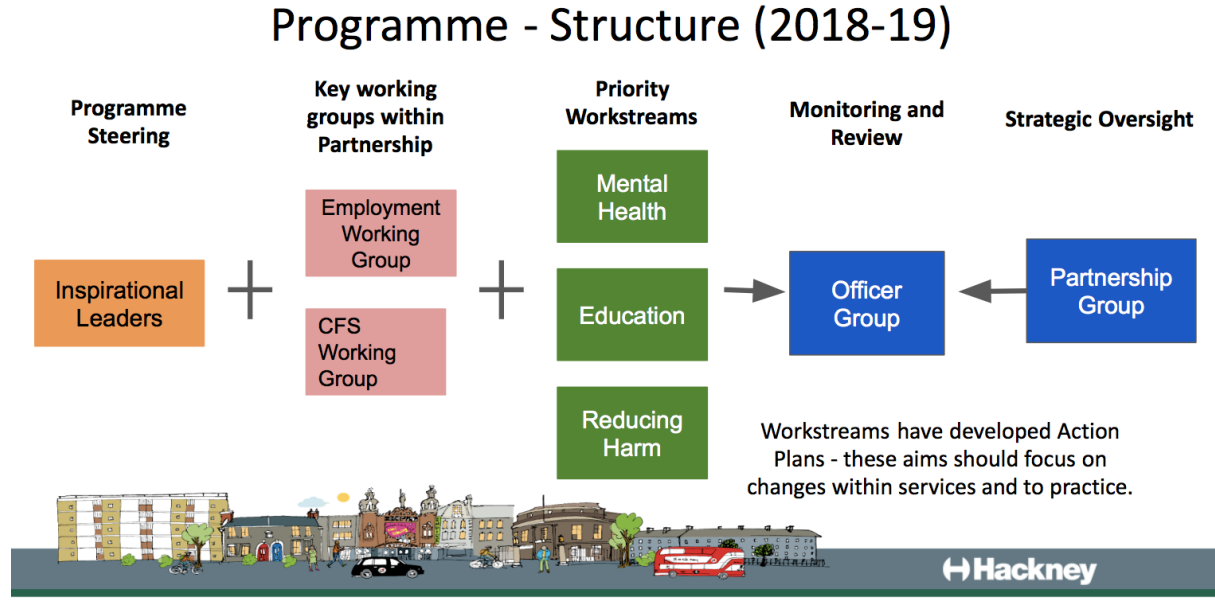
F. Enablers: Inclusive Leadership and Workforce Diversity

Within Hackney Council, the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme has had a profound impact on framing thinking about leadership culture and workforce diversity and shaping actions. It has given the Council the confidence to focus on the impact that leadership culture can have on tackling key inequalities and to have frank conversations about racial inequality in communities and in the workforce. The Council's Inclusive Leadership programme was launched in 2019. 35 Inclusive Leadership champions have been recruited from almost every division and reflecting Hackney's diversity and key equality groups. By the end of March 2020, Champions will have run workshops with all senior managers on the features of inclusive leadership and will then start to work with leaders to further embed the principles into culture and process.

Directors have also been listening to the experiences of black and minority ethnic staff, on the request of staff. This has been a powerful learning experience that has helped change Directors' mindsets. The insight has now informed divisional plans and Council wide actions to increase the diversity of black and minority ethnic staff at senior levels.

G. Current Programme Structure

This phase of delivery can be categorised into the following Programme Structure:



3. Challenges

Key Blockers and Challenges

Period assessed: 2019

Biggest risk: Lack of buy-in and sense of collective ownership and/or inability to convert discussions into actions

There is a recognition that we want to see immediate change. However we also acknowledge that we reconcile this with an understanding that we want to see sustained and sustainable change. This programme is seeking to tackle challenges which are systemic and decades-in-the-making.

Changes that require long-lasting solutions will also require systemic cultural change within and across organisations. They require authentic buy-in and, at the very least, need to create a consistent platform for members of the community and residents to influence the work.

This work means managing expectations regarding what can be achieved within a 10-15 year period and being specific about how this change will be made.

Based on the views of Hackney Council Leadership, members and officers, residents, voluntary sector leads, young people and other statutory sector staff, the following areas

were highlighted as the main blockages moving forward.

A. Absence of Community Voice

Key themes identified:

- Disillusionment and cynicism from community members about the likelihood of seeing real change.
- Lack of knowledge/awareness of the programme.
- Power imbalance between paid employees and community members
- Concern that the voice of Young Black Men has been marginalised within the programme
- Lack of equal partnership between community members, voluntary and statutory organisations.

B. Talking about Race and Racism

Key themes identified:

- Limited authentic discussion at an institutional level about racial inequalities or racism.
- There remains significant discomfort talking about race/racism.
- Scepticism that there is an appetite to understand contributions to systemic racism
- Some scepticism that institutions genuinely seek to understand the ways in which they are racist and make appropriate adjustments.
- Concerns that assumptions, biases and personal opinions continue to inform some strategies and approaches.
- Staff are fearful about naming issues and expressing views.

C. Challenges developing transformational Culture and Practice

Key themes identified:

- Concerns that strategies will not actually make change intended or be able to influence.
- Some members of staff still see this as an additional piece of work rather than changes in how they should work moving forward.
- Some concerns that data (quantitative or qualitative) alone is not enough to indicate an improvement
- Some staff face challenges in understanding how to transform their work so that it tackles biases and discriminatory world views.
- Difficulties understanding how to monitor successful challenges to racial inequalities.

D. Establishing Responsibility and capacity

Key themes identified include:

- Some staff across voluntary and statutory sectors still tacitly problematise young Black Men
- Resource constraints (time and finance) across local authority and VCS make implementing additional changes to work challenging.
- Some members of staff are yet to take personal responsibility for implementing changes where they can and adapting their work in relation to findings.
- There remains a fearfulness and protectiveness about work done.

4. Response

A. Youth Leadership and developing new Governance

At the end of 2018, the Lottery bid to fund the remainder of the programme was rejected. The Lottery highlighted that they did not feel the bid was centred around the community and youth leadership involvement. There was a sense that the work focused too much on Hackney Council and Hackney CVS.

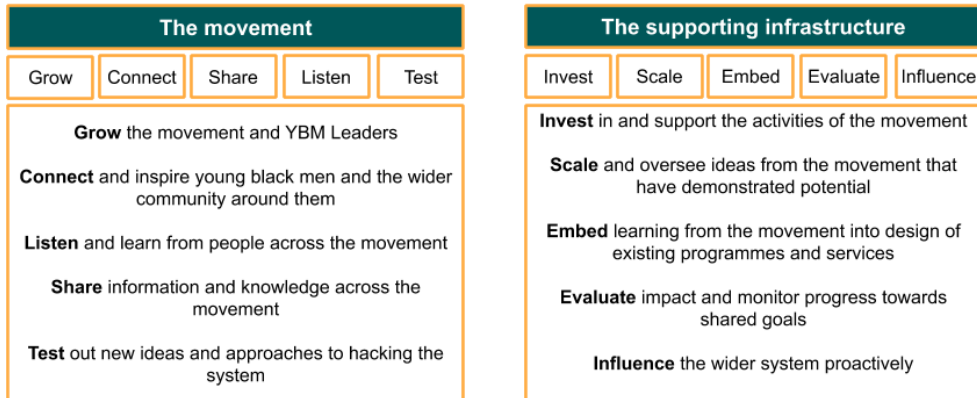
The Youth Leaders outlined that the existing structure and many of the existing methods have relied on them communicating from lived experience or haven't engaged them at all rather than recognising them as consultants and advisers in specific areas. As many have been connected to the programme since its inception, they have communicated frustration at being regarded 'tokenistically'. In conjunction with Practical Governance, Community members and youth leaders the following principles for collaboration were established.

Principle	What it means for how we organise ourselves
1. Young Black men must always be unified, heard and representing themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YBM resourced to create and lead their own activities and test solutions and to grow the movement YBM involved in numbers on every decision making group (at least 50% representation)
2. The system isn't working so we need the freedom to try something new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Series of new ideas developed and tested by YBM in an small scale, agile way Flexibility built in for every decision-making group and into every contracts
3. Who me? Yes you!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of space for everyone from across the movement to be involved at different levels in different ways Those involved always there because they have a specific purpose and role – no freeloaders
4. We need to stand shoulder to shoulder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment to truly understand and be led by those with lived experience Creation of mixed groups of people from across the movement Investment in activities that bring everyone together to build relationships and understanding
5. We have everything to share and learn. We are all in this together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and transparent sharing of information across groups and the wider movement
6. We all seek to face our own truths, name them and speak them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on creating safe space in meetings to share the good and the bad openly – keeping in real

With the support of Lankelly Chase and Practical Governance, the partnership has redesigned the governance to ensure that the programme is accountable to community members and young people and that they are in the lead.

The 'movement' and 'the supporting infrastructure'

- We are seeking to create a movement that influences and changes the system
- To do so may require two, connected approaches:

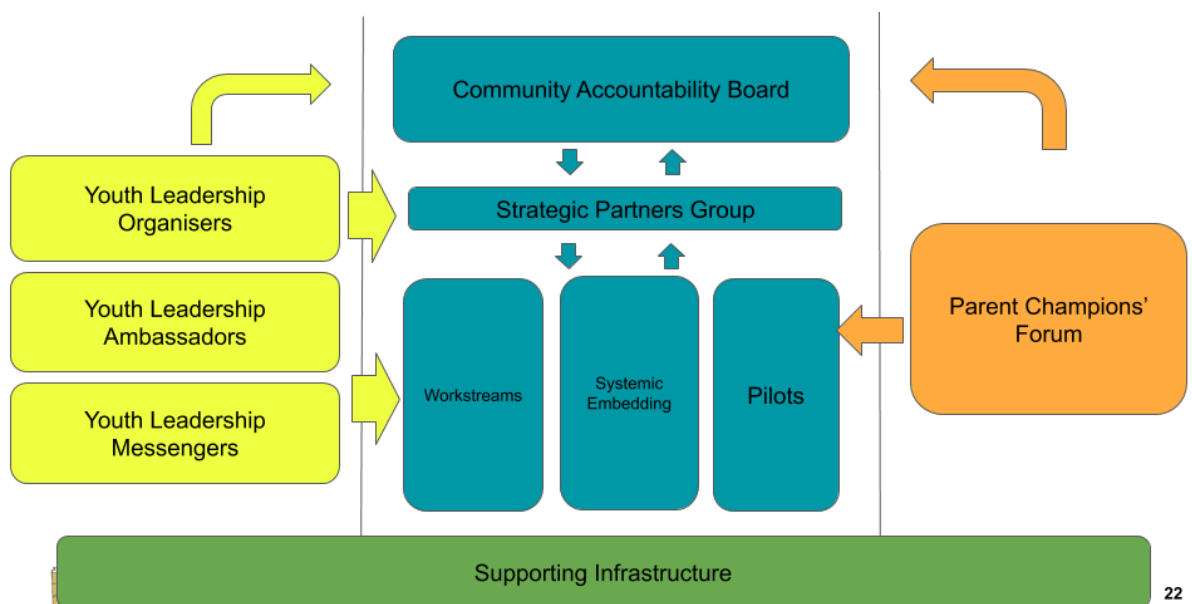


B. New Governance Structure

The structure will offer a consistent method of monitoring and evaluation for officers, new partnership working with the community and more autonomous youth-leadership.

The development of this new structure is with the aim of ensuring that there is clarity about the role of the youth leaders and an established role for parents in the new YBM programme. This will ensure that programme moving forward can adapt to the emerging needs of young people and

The Youth Leaders will now operate through three project teams: Messengers, Ambassadors and Organisers.



Crucially this new structure will see the creation of a community accountability board. This will feature a set number of residents, community leaders and young people reviewing assessing and having oversight of the work delivered. This will directly counteract

The sections on the left and right are dedicated forums for the involvement of residents (community members and young people) the centre is dedicated to delivery and the core “programme”.

This structure seeks to address new concerns by (corresponds to challenges identified in section 3)

- I. Providing a series of platforms for interested residents and community members to feed into the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men particularly among bodies which make decisions (thus amplifying community voice)
- II. Ensuring that existing work to tackle - is not only mainstream but the primary focus of the delivery section
- III. Emphasising the need to embed systemically and develop pilots concurrently will create a more transformative culture
- IV. Clearly defined roles within the structure will help define roles and responsibilities to deliver on this work.

C. Priorities

We have submitted finalising the follow-up bid to the National Lottery to finance the governance, youth leaders and the work of the programme for the next five years.

The coming months will see the development of a capacity building programme for the youth leaders implemented.

From April 2020 we should see a shift to the new Governance structure and increase in the delivery of new ways of working. This should see commitments from new partners, new areas of the council and tangible commitments from existing partners. The community accountability board will give programme leadership to local community members and ensure commitments are upheld.

There should also be a clearer system of reporting on work conducted within the programme and on data, experiences and examples of impact. Developing metrics to assess progress is a key priority.

Key next steps should also include the development of a ‘YBM Charter’; a toolkit which will allow organisations to adopt practices and become partners in Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men.