

Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny

Commission

Date of Meeting: 7 December 2020

Title of Report: Hackney Young Futures Commission “Valuing The Future Through Young Voices”

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Report Summary

This report provides an update to the “Valuing The Future Through Young Voices” report, approved in principle by Cabinet on 20 July 2020 (see Appendix 1 for Summary Report).

The recommendations contained within the report reflect the findings and the “Asks” made by the Commission.

This report also details how the Commission will feedback to young people in the borough on how Council and its Partners will respond to the report in a timely way and how they will continue to engage and involve young people in decision-making in the future, post-Commission.

Report Brief:

1. Background

1.2 “Valuing The Future Through Young Voices” focuses on the feedback from over 2,500 children and young people about their lived Hackney experience: their thoughts, concerns and ideas. The consultation was led by Hackney Young Futures Commission (referred to as the “Commission” for the purposes of this report), which is an independent, youth-led Commission, established in February 2019.

1.3 The key aim was to link young people with Councillors, Council officers and other stakeholders, so that together they can improve young people's lived experience in Hackney.

1.4 The ambition for the Commission was that it would reach out to young people across Hackney and give them a space in which their voices could be heard. The Commission did not want to hear from a sample of young people, or a few focus groups. They wanted to engage thousands of young people, right across the age spectrum, from every background, and this was achieved. The Commission has been the most comprehensive youth engagement exercise the borough has seen to date.

1.5 Young people were asked to share their ideas on how to make the changes that would improve their lives and if they had the power to influence, what they would prioritise.

1.6 From the outset, the Commission agreed to adopt co-production principles at the heart of how it would consult with young people; namely; doing things “with children” as opposed to doing things ‘to children” or ‘for children”.

1.7 The Council asked the Commission to make recommendations in order to improve the lives and life chances of young people in the borough and enable Members to listen to and learn from young people’s experiences of growing up in Hackney. The Commission asked the Council and its Partners to use the insights to inform current and joint future strategic planning and service delivery.

1.8 Based on the findings from the consultation, the Commission identified 72 proposed solutions called ‘Asks’, grouped into 6 main themes, namely; Secure Future, Healthy Future, Active Future, Inclusive Future, Safe Future and Bright Future.

1.9 The solutions were directly proposed by young people.

2. Oversight and Delivery Of Commission “Asks”

2.1 The insight gained through the Commission is a snapshot in time, a picture of young people’s lives in Hackney in 2019/20. Since most of the work was carried out, the world has changed irrevocably through the Covid-19 pandemic and we are now entering an unprecedented economic downturn, the murder of George Floyd in the USA had a profound impact on our communities, and young people face greater social, educational, and economic challenges than ever before.

2.2 As the Council, the Police, schools, our partners in the NHS and community take time to absorb what young people have said through this piece of work and

how to take forward the recommendations, the most important legacy for the Commission is to find ways to permanently put the voice of young people at the heart of decision making and policy making in Hackney.

2.3 In order to act on the findings and recommendations, recognising that a phased approach and more work may be necessary to support detailed action planning, the Commission has produced a draft a strategic delivery plan (Plan), which sets out how the Commission will deliver the Asks identified in the report and priorities over the coming year.

2.4 The Plan also sets out the Commission's values and principles and how they plan to respond to the challenges that lie ahead. Including creating new youth structures to enable effective youth voice and youth value.

2.5 There is already evidence of the value, impact and effectiveness of the work undertaken by the Commission to date, and which has informed various streams of work across the Council.

2.6 A final assessment and report back of achievements will be presented to young people and the Council two years on from the Commission in 2021.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Hackney Young Futures Commission "Valuing The Future Through Young Voices"