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03 December 2020

Dear Cllr Conway and Cllr Gordon

### **Child friendly borough**

Thank you for your [letter](#) of 6 August 2020 regarding the Council's approach to developing a child friendly borough, which followed your Commission meeting in January. We are grateful for the time taken by the Commission to consider this matter, and for the observations and recommendations set out in your letter. We apologise for the delay in responding.

Following approval at the Council's Cabinet on 19 October, you'll be aware that a consultation has now been launched on the draft Child-Friendly Places Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which runs until 12 January 2021. The new design guidelines will ensure all those who play a key role in planning and designing spaces in Hackney actively consider and plan for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds by establishing child-friendly principles and design guidelines for any proposed developments.



The ambition is to ensure that any proposed development in Hackney accommodates and supports children and young people in moving through the borough, providing them with opportunities to get physically active, connect with nature, and play in safe, healthy and unpolluted public spaces.

Last month saw the launch of the Valuing the Future Through Young Voices report, from the Young Futures Commission. We are incredibly proud of their work, which has been the most comprehensive youth engagement exercise the borough has ever seen - over the last year, the Commission has spoken to over 400 young people through street based engagement and hosted a series of events with over 1,000 attendees. However, our success will truly be judged, and rightly so, on the change that comes out of this process, and the Council is committed to working with our partners to engage with the findings and deliver the recommendations within the report.

The insight gained through the Commission is, of course, just a snapshot in time, a picture of young people’s lives in Hackney in 2019/20. Since most of this work was carried out, the world has changed irrevocably through the Covid-19 pandemic, we are entering an unprecedented economic downturn, the murder of George Floyd in America has had a profound impact on our communities, and our young people face greater social, educational, and economic challenges than ever before. It is vital that the thousands of young people who gave us their time can see the impact that they have made, and that they have not just been listened to, but heard, and we are committed to finding ways to permanently put the voice of young people at the heart of decision making and policy making in Hackney.

We have set out our response to each of the Scrutiny Commission recommendations below.

Recommendation One	Response
<p>That the final report of the Young Futures Commission (HYFC) is presented to the CYP Scrutiny Commission together with an action plan which sets out how recommendations to improve engagement and involvement with young people will be embedded across the Council directorates. In addition, the Commission would welcome plans on how statutory partners can be supported to implement principles and practice of youth engagement</p>	<p>Hackney Young Futures Commission published their report, <i>Valuing the Future Through Young Voices</i>, on 14 November. This is supported by a draft strategic delivery plan which prioritises the 19 "Asks" identified within the report and sets out how these can be delivered by the Council and its partners. All of the recommendations have been agreed in principle; the target date for completion of the high priority solutions, of which there are 72 identified under the 19 "Asks" in the report is 31 January 2021.</p> <p>The expectation is that the remainder of the solutions will be completed by December 2021. Progress of these will be monitored on a regular basis by the Commission.</p>

	<p>The draft Plan sets out the Commission’s values and principles which will underpin how the "Asks" will be delivered. The Plan will be jointly led by young people and Partner leads.</p> <p>The Plan sets out a formal accountability structure between various delivery partners and key stakeholders (including statutory partners) to ensure the division of accountabilities and responsibilities for progress, delivery and monitoring is clearly understood by all.</p> <p>The Commission will receive regular reports on progress and will provide an end of project assessment report to young people and the Council by 31 January 2021.</p>
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<p><b>Recommendation Two</b></p> <p>That the principles of engagement and involvement of children and young people highlighted in this correspondence, are used alongside emerging recommendations from HYFC to inform consultation guidance across the council.</p>	<p><b>Response</b></p> <p>The Commission's draft strategic delivery plan clearly and formally puts children and young people at the centre of leading, actively contributing and influencing guidance and decision making of specific projects in response to the 19 “Asks”. These are reflected in the principles and values and the accountability structures referred to above.</p> <p>More broadly, Communications is developing a Young Person’s Communications toolkit for Public Health, co-produced with young people, to support and inform future Council consultations - the intention is that this can then be adapted by other Council services to information consultation practice across the Council.</p>
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<p><b>Recommendation Three</b></p> <p>The Commission welcomes the development of Child Friendly Special Planning Document (SPD), and would recommend:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Further inclusion of the views of wider range of children and young people;</li> <li>2. Greater clarity on the expected outcomes of the Child Friendly</li> </ol>	<p><b>Response</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agreed. Further engagement opportunities, with a wider range of children and young people are available through the formal consultation process, which launched in October 2020 and is in accordance with the Council’s adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The Council strongly believes that such proactive engagement will ensure that the final version of the SPD is sound and</li> </ol>
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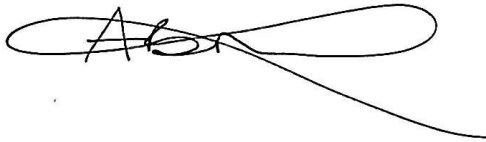
<p>Borough SPD and how this may influence local infrastructure;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Further work to establish those criteria through to measure and monitor the success of this planning policy;</li><li>4. Further detail on how young people themselves will understand this initiative, and the criteria through which they can assess local provision and success of this SPD (could there be a child friendly version of the SPD);</li><li>5. That the final Child Friendly SPD is presented to Scrutiny.</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. Agreed. This is being addressed through the expected and aspirational outcomes of the 8 Principles for a Child Friendly Built Environment in Hackney. This will be further addressed, in respect of how this may influence local infrastructure, through the Implementation and Delivery section of the emerging SPD.</li></ol> <p>The primary objective of the emerging Child Friendly SPD is to guide the delivery of new growth, and associated supporting infrastructure, that is sustainable and inclusive. This specifically relates to how it supports the independent mobility and play experience of children and young people in the Borough. These outcomes will be measured through the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) process, which provides an assessment of quantitative and qualitative indicators.</p> <p>In respect of infrastructure planning, the emerging Child Friendly SPD will, just like the Hackney Local Plan, have a direct link to the Hackney Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The latter document identifies anticipated investment in infrastructure improvements that will be required to support the Borough's planned-for future growth; namely, the growth identified through the Hackney Local Plan. The IDP will also seek to prioritise investment, in order to ensure that the delivery of infrastructure improvements corresponds with growth across the Borough.</p> <p>In both cases, the Local Plan AMR provides a mechanism for not only monitoring performance of new development but also triggering interventions - whether they be related to policy or infrastructure investment.</p> <p>Additionally the SPD will be used to influence and shape projects coming forward outside of</p>
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	<p>the planning application process. This includes improvements being delivered by Hackney Council in relation to Streetscene and highway works; open spaces; green infrastructure and regeneration. These improvements will bring benefits to children and young people living in those parts of the Borough that are less likely to experience change through new growth.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Agreed. The Council will measure and monitor success of planning policy through the Implementation and Delivery Tool sections of the emerging SPD.</li> <li>4. Agreed. A number of measures are underway: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Council is addressing how young people understand this document through the key messaging and methods used in the current engagement and consultation period.</li> <li>b. The Council's Design Team was utilised to ensure the language, graphics and layout of the document is user friendly for a variety of ages and abilities.</li> <li>c. The Council will address how young people themselves understand the criteria through the Implementation and Delivery Tool section, with specific focus on the language used for the Child Friendly Design Standard criteria tool.</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Agreed. The Council will seek to present the draft SPD to the Scrutiny Commission; anticipated December 2020.</li> </ol>
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<b>Recommendation Four</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>The Commission would recommend that the planned consultation to update the Statement of Community Involvement incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The views of children, young people (and their parents);</li> <li>● The emerging findings of the Young Futures Commission;</li> <li>● The Draft report being considered by Skills Economy and Growth Commission before finalisation.</li> </ul>	<p>Agreed. The future review of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement will seek to incorporate improvements identified through this process; including recommendations from the Commission. Drawing on the lessons learnt from the SPD programme, the Council will seek to include a specific chapter, in the updated Statement of Community Involvement, on engagement with children and young people. This is because the Council acknowledges them as being a group often unrepresented in plan-making and planning decision processes.</p>

	<p>The Council continues to seek inclusive engagement with all of its stakeholders on the preparation of the Hackney Local Plan and its associated thematic, area-based and procedural documents. Future draft versions of emerging policy, supplementary planning guidance and relevant procedural documents will be made available upon request to our stakeholders.</p>
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Yours sincerely



**Cllr Anntoinette Bramble**

Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for education, young people and children's social care



**Cllr Caroline Woodley**

Cabinet member for families, early years and play

CC: Polly Cziok, Director of Engagement, Culture and Organisational Development,  
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